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COBBETT'S

WEEKLY REGISTER.

VOLUME XLII.

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* In the text, the parish here alluded to was erroneously spelled "Preasure."

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FAREWELL LETTER

TO

THE LANDLORDS.

On the Game-Laws, and particularly on the recent Executions at Winchester, and also on the lot of the Landlords themselves.

Kensington, 2 April, 1822.

LANDLORDS,

I, LAST fall, addressed *ten letters* to you on the subject of the *Agricultural Report*. My object was to convince you, that you would be ruined; and, when I think of your general conduct towards the rest of the nation, and especially towards the labourers, I must say that I have great pleasure in seeing that my opinions are in a fair way of being verified to the full extent. I dislike the *Jews*; but, the Jews are not so inimical to the industrious classes of the country as you are. We should do a great deal better with the 'Squires from 'Change Alley, who, at any rate, have nothing of the ferocious and bloody in their characters. Engrafted upon your native want of feeling is the sort of military spirit of command that you have acquired during the late war. You appeared, at the close of that war, to think that you had made a *conquest* of the rest of the nation for ever; and, if it had not been for the burdens which the war left behind it, there would have been no such thing as air, in England, for any one but a slave to breathe. The Bey of Tunis never talked to his subjects in language more insolent than you talked to the people of England. The DEBT, the blessed Debt, stood our friend, made you soften your tone, and will finally place you where you ought to be placed.

This is the last Letter that I shall ever take the trouble to address to you. In a short time, you will become much too insignificant to merit any particular notice; but, just in the way of *farewell*, and that there may be something on record to show what care has been taken of the partridges, pheasants and hares, while the

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estates themselves have been suffered to slide away, I have resolved to address this one more Letter to you, which resolution has been occasioned by the recent *putting to death*, at Winchester, of two men denominated *Poachers*. This is a thing, which, whatever you may think of it, has not been passed over, and is not to be passed over, without full notice and ample record. The account of the matter, as it appeared in the public prints, was very short; but, the fact is such as never ought to be forgotten. And, while you are complaining of your "*distress*," I will endeavour to lay before the public that which will show, that the *late* has not been unmindful of even your *sports*. The time is approaching, when the people will have an opportunity of exercising their judgment as to what are called "game-laws;" when they will *look back* a little at what has been *done* for the sake of insuring *sport* to *landlords*. In short, landlords as well as labourers will *pass under review*. But, I must proceed to my subject, reserving reflections for a subsequent part of my letter.

The account, to which I have alluded, is this:

"HAMPSHIRE.—The Lent Assizes for this county concluded "on Saturday morning. The "Criminal Calendar contained "58 prisoners for trial, 16 *of* "*whom have been sentenced to* "*suffer death*, but *two only of* "*that number* (*poachers*) were "*left by the Judges for execution*, "viz. James Turner, aged 28, for "aiding and *assisting in killing* "*Robert Baker*, gamekeeper to "*Thomas Asheton Smith, Esq.* "in the parish of South Tidworth, "and Charles Smith, aged 27, "for having wilfully and maliciously *shot at* Robert Snelgrove, assistant gamekeeper to "*Lord Palmerston*, at Broadlands, in the parish of Romsey, "with intent to do him grievous "bodily harm. The Judge (Burrough) observed, it became necessary to *these cases*, that the "*extreme sentence of the law* "*should be inflicted*, to *deter* "*others, as resistance to game-*"*keepers was now arrived at an* "*alarming height*, and many lives "had been lost."

The first thing to observe here is, that there were *sixteen* persons sentenced to suffer death; and that, the only persons actually put to death, were those who had been endeavouring to get at the hares, pheasants or partridges of Thomas Asheton Smith, and of our Secretary at War, Lord Palmerston.

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Whether the Judge, Burrough (who was long Chairman of the Quarter Sessions in Hampshire), uttered the words ascribed to him, or not, I cannot say; but, the words have gone forth in print, and the impression they are calculated to make is this: that it was necessary to put these two *men to death*, in order to deter others from resisting gamekeepers. The putting of these men to death has excited a very deep feeling throughout the County of Hants; a feeling, very honourable to the people of that County, and very natural to the breast of every human being.

In this case there appears to have been a killing, in which Turner *assisted;* and Turner might, by possibility, have given the fatal blow; but in the case of Smith, there was no killing, at all. There was a mere *shooting at*, with intention to do him bodily harm. This latter offence was not a crime for which men were put to death, even when there was no assault, or attempt at assault, on the part of the person shot at; this was not a crime punished with death, until that terrible act, brought in by the late Lord Ellenborough, was passed, and formed a part of our matchless Code; that Code which there is such a talk about *softening;* but which softening does not appear to have in view this Act, or any portion of the Game-Laws.

In order to form a just opinion with regard to the offence of these two men that have been hanged at Winchester, we must first consider the *motives* by which they were actuated, in committing the acts of violence laid to their charge. For, it is the *intention*, and not the mere act, that constitutes the crime. To make an act murder, there must be *malice afore-thought*. The question, therefore, is, did these men attack, or were they the attacked? It seems to be clear that they were the attacked parties; for they are executed, according to this publication, to deter others from *resisting* gamekeepers!

I know very well that there is Law for this; but what I shall endeavour to show is, that the Law ought to be altered; that the people of Hampshire ought to petition for such alteration; and that if you, the Landlords, were wise, you would petition also, for an alteration, if not a total annihilation of that terrible Code, called the Game-Laws, which has been growing harder and harder, all the time that it ought to have been wearing away. It should never be forgotten, that, in

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order to make punishments efficient in the way of example, they must be thought just by the Community at large; and they will never be thought just if they aim at the protection of things belonging to one particular class of the Community, and, especially, if those very things be grudged to this class by the Community in general. When punishments of this sort take place, they are looked upon as unnecessary, the sufferers are objects of pity, the common feeling of the Community is in their favour, instead of being against them; and it is those who cause the punishment, and not those who suffer it, who become objects of abhorrence.

Upon seeing two of our countrymen hanging upon a gallows, e naturally, and instantly, run back to the cause. First we find the fighting with gamekeepers; next we find that the men would have been transported if caught in or near a cover with guns, after dark; next we find that these trespassers are exposed to transportation because they are in pursuit, or supposed to be in pursuit, of partridges, pheasants or hares; and then, we ask, where is the foundation of a law to punish a man with transportation for being in pursuit of these animals? And where, indeed, is the foundation of the Law, to take from any man, be he who he may, the right of catching and using these animals? We know very well; we are instructed by mere feeling, that we have a right to live, to see and to move. Common sense tells us that there are some things which no man can reasonably call his property; and though poachers (as they are called) do not read Blackstone's Commentaries, they know that such animals as are of a wild and untameable disposition, any man may seize upon and keep for his own use and pleasure. "All these things, so long as they "remain in possession, every man "has a right to enjoy without dis-"turbance; but if once they es-"cape from his custody, or he "voluntarily abandons the use of "them, they return to the com-"mon stock, and any man else "has an equal right to seize and "enjoy them afterwards."

In the Second Book and Twenty-sixth Chapter of Blackstone, the poacher might read as follows: "With regard likewise "to wild animals, *all mankind* "*had by the original grant of the* "*Creator* a right to pursue and "take away any fowl or insect of "the air, any fish or inhabitant of "the waters, and any beast or

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"reptile of the field: and this "natural right still continues in "every individual, unless where "it is restrained by the civil laws "of the country. And when a "man has once so seized them, "they become, while living, his "qualified property, or, if dead, "are absolutely his own: so that "to steal them, or otherwise in-"vade this property, is, according "to the respective values, some-"times a criminal offence, some-"times only a civil injury."

Poachers do not read this; but that reason which is common to all mankind tells them that this is true, and tells them, also, *what to think*, of any positive law that is made to restrain them from this right granted by the Creator. Before I proceed further in commenting upon the case immediately before me, let me once more quote this English Judge, who wrote fifty years ago, when the Game Code was mild indeed, compared to the one of the present day. "Another violent alteration," says he, "of the English Con-"stitution consisted in the depo-"pulation of whole countries, for "the purposes of the King's royal "diversion; and subjecting both "them, and all the ancient forests "of the kingdom, to the unreason-"able severities of forest laws "imported from the continent, "whereby the slaughter of a "beast was made almost as penal "as the death of a man. In the "Saxon times, though no man "was allowed to kill or chase the "King's deer, yet he might start "any game, pursue, and kill it "upon his own estate. But the "rigour of these new constitutions "vested the sole property of all "the game in England in the "King alone; and no man was "entitled to disturb any fowl of "the air, or any beast of the "field, of such kinds as were "specially reserved for the royal "amusement of the Sovereign, "without express license from the "King, by a grant of a chase or "free warren: and those fran-"chises were granted as much "with a view to preserve the "breed of animals, as to indulge "the subject. From a similar "principle to which, though the "forest laws are now mitigated, "and by degrees grown entirely "obsolete, yet from this root has "sprung up a bastard slip, known "by the name of the game-law, "now arrived to and wantoning "in its highest vigour: both "founded upon the same un-"reasonable notions of permanent "property in wild creatures; and "both productive of the same

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"tyranny to the commons; but "with this difference; that the "forest-laws established only one "mighty hunter throughout the "land, the game-laws have raised "a little Nimrod in every manor."

When this was written nothing was known of the present severity of the law. Judge Blackstone says that the Game Law was then wantoning in its *highest vigour*; what, then, would he have said, if any one had proposed to make it *felony* to resist a Gamekeeper? He calls it tyranny to the commons, as it existed in his time; what would he have said of the present Code; which, so far from being thought a thing to be *softened*, is never so much as mentioned by those humane and gentle creatures, who are absolutely supporting a sort of reputation, and aiming at distinction in Society, in consequence of their incessant talk about softening the Criminal Code?

The Law may say what it will, but the feelings of mankind will never be in favour of this Code; and whenever it produces putting to death, it will, necessarily, excite horror. It is impossible to make men believe that any particular set of individuals, should have a permanent property in wild creatures. That the owner of land should have a quiet possession of it, is reasonable and right and necessary; it is also necessary, that he should have the power of inflicting pecuniary punishment in a moderate degree upon such as trespass on his lands; but, his right can go no further according to reason. If the law give him ample compensation for every damage that he sustains, in consequence of a trespass on his lands, what right has he to complain?

The law authorises the King, in case of invasion, or apprehended invasion, to call upon all his people to take up arms in defence of the country. The Militia Law compels every man, in his turn to become a soldier. And upon what ground is this? There must be some reason for it, or else the law would be tyranny. The reason is, that every man has *rights* in the country to which he belongs; and that, therefore, it is his duty to defend the country. Some rights, too, beyond that of merely living, merely that of breathing the air. And then, I should be glad to know, what rights an Englishman has, if the pursuit of even wild animals is to be the ground of transporting him from his country? There is a sufficient punishment

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provided by the law of trespass; quite sufficient means to keep men off your land altogether; how can it be necessary, then, to have a law to transport them for coming upon your land? No, it is not for coming upon the land, it is for coming after the wild animals, which nature and reason tells them, are as much theirs as they are yours.

It is impossible for the people not to contrast the treatment of these two men at Winchester with the treatment of some *gamekeepers* that have killed or maimed the persons they call Poachers; and it is equally impossible for the people, when they see these two men hanging on a gallows, after being recommended to mercy, not to remember the almost instant pardon, given to the Exciseman, who was not recommended to mercy, and who was found guilty of wilful murder in the County of Sussex!

It is said, and, I believe truly, that there are more persons imprisoned in England for offences against the *game-laws*, than there are persons imprisoned in France (with more than twice the population) for *all sorts of offences put together*. When there was a loud outcry against the cruelties committed on the *priests* and the *seigneurs* by the people of France, ARTHUR YOUNG bade them *remember* the cruelties committed on the people by the *game-laws*, and to bear in mind how many had been made *galley-slaves for having killed, or tried to kill, partridges, pheasants* and *hares!*

However, I am aware that it is quite useless to address observations of this sort to you. I am quite aware of that; and yet, there are circumstances, in your present situation, which, one would think, ought to make you *not very gay* upon the hanging of the two men at Winchester. It delights me, I assure you, to see the situation that you are in; and I shall, therefore, now, once more, and for *the last time* address you, upon that subject.

We all remember how haughty, how insolent, you have been. We all bear in mind your conduct for the last thirty-five years; and the feeling of pleasure at your present state is as general as it is just. In my *Ten Letters* to you I told you that you would lose your estates. Those of you who have any capacity except that which is necessary to enable you to kill wild animals, see this now, as clearly as I do; and yet you evince no intention to change your

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courses. You hang on with unrelenting grasp; and cry "*pauper*" and "*poacher*" and "*radical*" and "*lower orders*" with as much insolence as ever! It is always thus: men like you may be convinced of error; but they never change their conduct. They never become just because they are convinced that they have been unjust: they must have a great deal more than that conviction to to make them just.

It pleases me to see you *amused* in the manner that you are. Pray take care of the "*game;*" and the taxgatherers will take care of the fields and woods that the game feed on and live in. Pray take care to *preserve* the partridges, pheasants and hares, and also to preserve the foxes that eat all these. Attend to these matters, carry on wars with poachers, and pursue to the gallows those that defeat you in the field; and, as to the *estates themselves*, they will find most vigilant guardians in the taxgatherers and the fundholders. Do this and believe firmly, that a "*surplus of five millions*" will save you, and believe also that there is a surplus of five millions, and you will soon be in as comfortable a state as it is possible for any just man to wish to see you in.

A very pretty picture of the state of things has been exhibited by Mr. WESTERN, who says that *two-thirds* of the farmers of Essex *are insolvent*. A letter that I have just received from *that county* contains a curious and interesting case; and, as it is one which will soon be quoted as a *precedent*, I shall state it pretty fully. A farmer, in Essex, famous for his agriculture, and renting, at a *very high rent*, a large farm of one of the haughtiest and most grasping of the very haughtiest and most grasping family that ever existed even in Normandy; this farmer, being wholly unable to pay, *except out of capital*, any rent at all, and being bound by *lease* which had several years to run, applied to his haughty and greedy lord to reduce his rent in a great degree. The lofty lord would take off but a mere trifle. The tenant, found himself bound to his absolute ruin, as he must have lost at *least fifteen hundred pounds a year* for several years to come. The landlord would not take the lease off his hands. He had, therefore, this choice; to be wholly beggared, or to *sell off his stock and leave the country*.

He chose the latter; and, *before Lady-Day*, sold off his live and dead stock, his farming imple-

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ments, and every rag and stick of his household furniture; and is now gone no one knows whither. The landlord made attempts *to stop the sale;* but, in vain; for the *rent was ready;* or, at least, *none was due*, and he had no right to touch the property of the tenant, until some rent was due.

Thus, as my Correspondent observes, "*a link* in the cele- "brated *chain* has dropped clean "out," and, in spite of our "*beautiful* constitution," one member has withdrawn from the family compact of "standing or falling together." This tenant, my Correspondent says, has always borne a high character for probity as well as for industry and skill; and the question now to be answered, is, has his present conduct been agreeable to the laws of *morality*, or has it not? I will not take upon me to answer this question; but, I will *state the case fairly;* I will give the arguments on both sides; and then leave the farmers, who are of the "*chain*," to judge for themselves.

It is very easy to call a man *a rogue*, when we cannot get from him as much as we want to get. It is very easy to accuse him of *breach of engagements.* But, as to hold to wicked engagements is never right, so it is not always wrong to break through others that are not positively wicked.

LANDLORD. You took the farm with your eyes open; you had your chance of good times; and, if wheat had risen to 50*s.* a bushel, instead of falling to 5*s.* a bushel, you would not then have suffered *me* to break my engagements.

TENANT. I was, to be sure, not deprived of my sight or of my senses when I took the farm; but I had, in fact, *no chance on my side.* I contracted to have such chance; I should have had the chance of gain as well as of loss; but, what has happened? *Since* I took the farm *laws have been passed* to make my wheat sell at 5*s.* a bushel instead of 15*s.* and, therefore, I am, in conscience, freed from my engagement.

LANDLORD. But, here; is there not your *name* to the lease; and will you say, that it is *honest* to fly from your solemn engagements; will you set up yourself against the laws?

TENANT. What law have you for that lease? The law that existed in 1812. But, that law, as far as relates to landlord and tenant, has been *since* abrogated. It has, in reality, been wholly abolished as to its spirit. The meaning of my lease was, that it should be violated on *neither side;*

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and, if you, or others for you, have first violated it, I must save myself from the consequences as well as I can.

LANDLORD. At this rate no engagement could ever hold; for any one may pretend, that *any change* in the laws of the country, made after the signing of a lease, sets aside the moral obligation to adhere to the lease; so that no tenant any more than landlord could ever be safe.

TENANT. I must beg your pardon here; and, if you suppose my principle to apply in such a boundless manner, I must give the same stretch to yours; and then let us suppose a man to rent a light-house on the shore, and suppose a law to be subsequently passed to *prevent all use of light-houses*. Will you say, that the man is in conscience bound to continue to pay rent on the light-house as long as he have anything to pay with?

LANDLORD. This is not an analogous case at all; for, the law does not forbid you *to use the farm*. You are as free to use it now as you were before the paper-money and bullion laws were passed.

TENANT. To *use*? For what purpose? The *object*, contemplated by the lease, *is*, in both cases *the same*. The use of the light-house to the tenant is *to yield him something to pay rent with* at least; and this is the use of the farm. And, if a law, or laws, be passed to *destroy this use*, the farmer's case is just the same as that of the light-house man.

LANDLORD. But, you knew when you signed your lease, that the Parliament had the power of passing *what laws it pleased*. You had seen it pass some pretty oddish laws. You had seen it pass laws to authorise the Bank to refuse to pay its promissory notes. You had seen it pass laws to quash *qui tam* actions against the non-resident Clergy. You had seen enough, one would think, to make you take all chances into view, when you signed your lease.

TENANT. I had seen a great deal, I must confess; but, it never yet was a rule of law, that an engagement between man and man *contemplates* the breach of it by the law itself, which is its only guarantee. And the very act of my signing the lease proves, that I could not have in contemplation the chance of a law being passed to take away the possibility of my holding the farm without ruin, any more than I could have an earthquake in contemplation; and, will you say, that, if an earth-

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quake were to take away, or the sea cover, half the farm, I am still bound in conscience to pay rent for the whole? And, what is the difference to me, whether half my produce or half my price be taken from me? In *law* I know that your claim would be good, though nine-tenths of the farm were covered by the sea; but, is it good *in conscience*? And, is it not to be a rogue to demand the payment in such a case? And should I be any more bound in conscience to pay such a rogue than I should be to pay a sum promised to a highwayman in order to save my throat from his knife?

LANDLORD. If men make a distinction between what *conscience* demands and what is demanded by their *positive* and *solemn engagements*, there can be no faith in any engagements at all; in a short time, none could possibly exist; and all confidence between man and man must be utterly destroyed.

TENANT. Oh, no! All confidence between man and man will not be destroyed, but, rather, increased, by my freeing myself from your *unjust* claims; claims that all mankind must know to be unjust and dishonest. Many positive engagements, gaming engagements, contracts of minors, and various others, though positive enough, are set aside without any injury to public morals. And, though there be *no law* of Parliament for setting aside my lease, there is better reason for it than in one out of a thousand of the above cases.

LANDLORD. But, in the cases you have mentioned, the landing party has had something to do in deluding the other party and in producing the injurious engagement; whereas I did not make the law, nor assist to make the law, which has been taking away your capital, and that is reducing you to ruin. If I had been *one of those who made the law*, it would be a different matter; for, then, you might have some room to say, that I made it in order to get more rent from you than you contracted to pay.

TENANT. This makes, certainly, no difference *to me*, and very little *to you*, if you insist upon my fulfilling the *letter* of my engagement. For, what you now wish to get through the means of others, you would, I must conclude, have had no scruple to get by your own means. If you *approve* of the laws of which I complain, then you are a partaker in their unjust pressure on me; and, to convince

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me, that you do not approve of them, you must show no disposition to profit from them at my expence.

LANDLORD. Well; it is, I see, useless to talk; and, therefore, I shall distrain for my rent, unless you pay it punctually, *bang up*.

TENANT. I will pay *bang up* once more, and that will be all; for, I shall, before the next rent be due, sell all off and leave not a straw for you to distrain on.

LANDLORD. But, I will put you in gaol.

TENANT. You must catch me first!

LANDLORD. But, will you not have a *little patience*. Better times may come. Things may come about. It is merely a sudden transition from war to peace; the sun of your prosperity has only hidden his head behind a cloud, and will, by-and-by, burst forth with more splendour than ever. Don't believe what that seditious fellow Cobbett says; it is all *blasphemy*; I can assure you it is; upon my word it is.

TENANT. Do you *really* think, now, in your conscience, that we shall see prosperous times and high prices again?

LANDLORD. Do I think so! Did you ever know me tell a lie?

TENANT. No. [I shall now. *Aside.*] But do you really think so?

LANDLORD. Do I think so! Look ye here, farmer: I *know*, that corn will be higher than ever next year. I *know* it, I tell you!

TENANT. But, *how* do you know it?

LANDLORD. Why . . . . . but you'll not mention it again?

TENANT. Not I.

LANDLORD. Why, then [*whispers*] my Lord Sapskull told me that they were *resolved* to give us higher prices than ever! What do you think of that?

TENANT. If I were *sure* that we should have high prices—

LANDLORD. You are sure; I am sure; upon my word and honour and soul we shall; "as G—d's my Saviour," we shall!

TENANT. Well, then, it can do you no harm to take back your lease and give me mine; for my poor wife is half crazy about it, and says that her children will come to want a mouthful of bread.

LANDLORD. She's a fool; she's a fool; a silly fool! Why ye arn't under petticoat government, are ye? Give her Judge Buller. Give a stick as thick as your thumb.

TENANT. No; I would rather not. She is very uneasy, and she is not well besides; and, as you are *sure* of higher prices than ever; as you are sure that Cobbett's wrong; as ——

LANDLORD. He is; he is; a liar, a blasphemer; "as G—d's my Saviour" he is!

TENANT. Well, then, here's my lease.

LANDLORD. No; I won't take the lease! You sha'nt give up the lease. I'll make you pay your rent; or, "as G—d's my Saviour" I'll strip you as naked as a robin! And so I leave you to do what you can.—*Exit.*

TENANT. (*Solus.*) Egad, Cobbett's right! This hypocritical knave would take from me and my family our last penny, and send us to the poor-house, and that, too, under pretence of a scrupulous regard for morality. I'll pay him his rent this time; but, before next Lady-day, he shall have his

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farm to himself, and I will be beyond his reach with what little means he has left me.

This is much about what will be going on soon after next harvest. In many cases it has taken place already. It is not pleasant to move a wife and family *across the Atlantic;* but, it is better to do that than to move them into a *poor-house;* and, in many cases, this is the *only* alternative; for, as to going to *France*, what are *good* English people to do there? And, besides, the Bourbons and all their mess may be set dancing again soon, for any thing that we know to the contrary. In America there are English manners and English people. There living is cheap and life unannoyed by the taxgatherer. There there is no robbing, no cutting of throats, no hangings like those at Winchester. There you may live for years, and never hear of or from the government, directly or indirectly. It is natural and right for men to like their native country best; but it is not natural for them to like a *poor-house;* and a poor-house must be the lot of those who continue to *pay rent* for land, in England, with present prices and present taxes.

Well, say you, but what are we landlords to do? Are we to have *nothing?* Yes; as much as you had in 1792, if you will *bring the taxes down to the standard of* 1792. This you have the *power* to do; and, if you want the *will*, what *justice* is there in taking the last shilling from the tenant? And, what a *folly* is it too, even if you *can* do it! For, when this tenant is destroyed, where is the *next* to come from? The next race of tenants can be little more than *bailiffs;* and, at this very moment the *bailiff-system* has begun. The state of things is hourly growing worse; and worse it must grow; because there is nothing proposed that can have a tendency to check the evil, while that evil, like almost all other evils, has a natural tendency to increase.

Mr. WESTERN has lately let fall something about a re-*consideration of Peel's Bill.* But, what is meant by a reconsideration of this measure? Is it a *repeal?* Is it any thing to stop the progress of the Bill? That would be a plain downright *declaration of Bankruptcy.* It would be such an act of shame, disgrace, of infamy, as was never before heard of in any country upon earth. The parliament stands now, with the people, in a light not easily described, or, at least, that I do not care to describe; but, in what light would it stand, if this act were to be repealed? It is, therefore, useless to talk of a repeal of this act: it cannot be repealed without *certain death* to the system.

As to the schemes that are on foot, they cannot be regarded as other than the offspring of *flurried* not to say *insane* minds. They have all one common tendency, and that is to make the state of things *worse* than it is now. One would think that mere *instinct* would guide men to wiser conclusions. Men may commit errors, and even great errors, without being mad or ideots; but to adopt in *every* case, precisely that which is best calculated to augment the evil is strange indeed! The very worst feature in our case is, that those who have the *power* in their hands are *ignorant*

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how to act. They really appear, for years past, to have had not the smallest particle of that knowledge which is necessary in the present emergency. They cannot see what is clearly seen by a very large part of the people; and, as to *me*, what is there that has happened, which I did not foresee and foretell?

All along throughout the years 1814 and 1815 I was warning the parliament of the result, if it did not reduce taxes or augment the paper-money. In 1818, when in America, I accidently saw Mr. TIERNEY's speech urging a return to cash-payments; and, instantly, without a moment's hesitation, I answered that speech, and pointed out all the consequences of any such attempt, unless taxes and debt and contracts were reduced at the same time. I not only foretold evil; but pointed out how the evils would come, and on whom they would fall. At the close of a passage of this sort I had these words:—"But, you "wish the Bank to proceed *gra-* "*dually* and *gently*. When a man "has *means* that are dropping in "*gradually*, he may pay gradu- "ally; but, this is quite another "case. The Bank has *now* all "the means that it ever will have, "or can have. If the paper be "drawn in gradually, the ap- "proach of the misery and ruin "and uproar will be gradual, that "is all. The want of employ- "ment will come on *gradually* and "*gently*, but it will *come*. The "convulsion will be the *end* of "the scene, but there will be a "*convulsion*. To draw in the "paper-money without reducing "the interest of the Debt and all "public pay and salaries, is to "ruin all persons in trade, and to "starve the labouring classes; "and what signifies it whether "this ruin and starvation come "all at once, or by degrees?"

Mr. TIERNEY had talked of the evil being prevented by a *gradual* return to cash payments; and had said, that, by this *gradual* work, *ruin of farmers, want of employment* and *convulsion*, would be avoided. Nothing could be more absurd than this; unless it could have been proved, that the climax of the evil was a thing to be *permanently endured*. To change gradually *from bad to good* may, in many cases, be the best way; but to change gradually *from prosperity to distress* was what no man ever before thought of as a desirable thing, and especially as the means of lasting national safety! It seems always to have been expected, that, when the evil, when the distress, when the misery got to its height, it would *cease*, or, at least, *begin to decline*. How such a thought could find its way into any sane head I know not; but it did; and on this thought the Bill of Peel was adopted. As if they had said: there will be *suffering*; but, it will last but *four years*; and then we shall have cash-payments complete, and *the suffering will cease!* What! the suffering cease just when the ass had got the full weight of his burden on his back; which burden was *never to be taken off?* We have not yet got any thing like the *full burden* on us. The full burden will not be felt till about September or December 1823. Then the landlords; then you who tossed up your caps for the French war, and for Six-Acts,

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will find the full burden stuck on fast to your backs.

Of this, too, you had *due warning* in the Letter to Mr. TIERNEY, where I said: "Wheat is 15*s.* "a bushel, and a man, calcu- "lating upon that price, rents a "farm at a hundred a-year. The "drawings-in at the Bank bring "wheat down to 5*s.* a bushel. "The man cannot pay his rent, "his stock is seized and sold. He "goes to gaol, and his family to "the poor-house. In the mean- "while there is no money to pay "the journeymen and labourers. "Employment cannot be had; "and starvation follows. How- "ever, men do not, in very great "numbers, starve to death, with- "out an effort to save life. Hence "robberies and thefts; and, to "prevent detection, come mur- "ders. This is the natural, this "is the inevitable progress."

Now, with all this before their eyes, with the danger not *asserted*, but *proved*, the parliament proceeded to pass the Bill of Peel, which (unaccompanied with other measures) was, as I then said it would be, an act of confiscation on all but the lenders and those who lived on the taxes. Such has it proved to be; and there is not a man in the kingdom who has so good a right to rejoice at it as myself. The warning was wise; it was *laughed* at; it was laughed at, too, because it came from *me*. What other than delight ought I to feel at the result? It may be said, that I ought to now recommend what I think would be best. I recommend to those who have brought the nation into this state to *get out of the way*, and to make room *for me and for others*. Oh, horrible! Well, then, why should I recommend any thing? What is there that calls upon me to point out salutary measures? What should lead me to suppose this same body of men likely to make a good use of my recommendations? Do I see them disposed to do any of the things which the times demand? Do I hear one single man amongst them uttering sentiments towards *the people* such as I wish to hear uttered? Do I any where witness the smallest attempt to conciliate the people? I have no desire, and I ought to have no desire, that the landlords should adopt measures to save themselves. They have pushed things to such a length, that I can entertain no such desire. Out of their ruin a better state of things *may* come, and a *worse cannot*. They have ruined and tortured others enough, and now the ruin and torture are coming home to themselves.

What I wish to see, is, the THING to go *on to its full extent*. Not to be arrested or turned aside by any thing. That nothing may *happen* to furnish a pretence for saying, that the THING would have answered *if it had not been for this* or *that*. I should like to see all go on just as it is now proceeding, till we see what a Pitt-system will produce in the end. Let Debt and Sinking-fund and barracks and penitentiary and military academy and Staff and Civil List and the parson-magistrates and the boroughs and all the whole THING go on just as it is going without any "ameliorations;" and then the world will witness such scenes as shall be remembered for half a score of centuries! We shall see a complete revolution in property;

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we shall see high-sounding names brought down to mere mockery; we shall see landlords begging in the streets, or footmen to Jew-boys or to loan-jobbers' clerks. We shall see such things as never were seen, heard of, or dreamt of, before. Men do not take such a tumble all at once, nor all at a time. Here, indeed, the thing is effected *by degrees;* as is always the case, when men fall into beggary from riches. Many are already on the eve of being without a shilling. They, thus far, *disappear* from public view; but, by-and-by, when they fall faster, they will have less shame, and there will be no means left of hiding them. As soon as the *present race of renters* are gone, and that will be pretty quickly, the Landlords will come tumbling down. It is even now nothing but the capitals of the tenants that hold thousands of them up; and, if those tenants, who have capital, resolve to keep it, the rot amongst the landlords must speedily appear.

Now, Landlords, I have addressed to you the last words that you will ever get from me. The Letters that I shall write on the *new Agricultural Report*, and the first of which will be published next week, I shall address to other persons; perhaps the ploughmen, or the poachers; and of one thing I am very sure; namely, that I cannot address them to any description of persons that are less worthy of respect than you are. I can address them to nobody of so little understanding, so little public spirit, so little humanity, so little mercy. My main object shall be to show the farmers their danger; to warn them against the delusive traps set for them; and to induce them to save themselves and families. They have had no power to prevent this state of things; you have. They have, indeed, been instruments in your hands; but, if I can prevent it, they shall be your instruments no longer; and I have great satisfaction in believing, that I possess this power of prevention to a very considerable extent. You are tasting, and about to taste, the fruits of a system of your creating and upholding. You have nobody to blame; and, which forms the jet of the case, you have produced your own ruin while you have been ruining others, and those too whom it was your duty to preserve. I have for twelve years at least been praying to see you in your present state: my prayer is answered at last, and now I bid you *farewell*.

WM. COBBETT.

NORWICH MEETING.

On Friday the 29th March, a most numerous Meeting, consisting principally of Farmers and Tradesmen, assembled and dined at the White Swan in this City, according to public advertisement, for the purpose of considering and discussing the existing Agricultural Distress, and the necessity of a Reform in Parliament. To this Meeting Mr. Cobbett had received a special invitation. Mr. Samuel Clarke was unanimously called to the Chair. After the cloth was removed the following toasts were drunk.

The Memory of the beloved and lamented Queen Caroline, in solemn silence.

The Earl of Albemarle.

T. W. Coke, Esq.

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Mr. Peel and his Bill.

The Buckingham Bill of Fare, and may it be a warning to English Farmers.

A Reform in the Commons' House of Parliament on the basis of Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments.

The Chairman then rose to propose the health of their guest, Mr. Cobbett.---Drunk with three times three.

Mr. COBBETT, in returning thanks to the company for the flattering manner in which his health had been drank, said, he would not so far affect modesty as to disclaim in any degree meriting the marked approbation with which he had been honoured, but could assure them from the bottom of his heart that he felt and always should feel deeply penetrated by their kindness. Here I should stop, Gentlemen, (said Mr. C.) well knowing my inability, generally speaking, to communicate useful knowledge to a company like this. But, coming, as I do, immediately from the seat of *wisdom*; that is to say, from the seat of our government, it may be expected, perhaps, that I should communicate some *news*, or intelligence respecting what that wisdom appears to have in store for the relief of a people whom it acknowledges to be in the deepest distress. When I had, upon a former occasion, the honour of addressing a company in this room, the thing which I had most at heart was, that with regard to the farmers, there was no hope but in flight from their farms, except, indeed, they could hold them without the payment of rent. I have seen nothing in the movements of time; and certainly nothing in the motions of the "collective wisdom," to make me change my opinion. I then expressed my conviction that prices would fall lower than they then were; and lower they have already fallen. My opinion now is that they will fall still lower, and much lower, before May 1823; and the main thing for the farmers to bear in mind is that, if they pay any rent at all from this time forward, they must, except in very peculiar cases, pay that rent out of capital. Even if he squeeze his labourers down to half starvation, and drive them to absolute despair, the farmer will not have the means of paying rent, if the present taxes be retained and if Peel's Bill be inforced. My reasons for this opinion I have before stated upon various occasions; but I now wish to notice an argument, or, rather, alleged facts, in opposition to my opinions with regard to an expected further fall of prices. It is alleged by Bank Directors in and out of Parliament, that they have now a greater quantity of gold and paper, that is to say, of circulating medium altogether, out at the Bank of England, than they had some time ago; and a much greater quantity out than they had in the year 1792. Now, this being the matter of fact, we may believe it or not, according to our belief or disbelief in the words of the parties; and I have no objection to say for my own part, that I have not the smallest belief in any thing on account of its being asserted by the Bank or its Directors. But, if we were to admit these allegations to be true, they amount to nothing in contradiction of my opinion; but, as we

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shall presently see, rather make for that opinion. The *Bank* may have more money out; but how does the Bank know what the country bankers have out? The Bank can know nothing of that for a certainty And how can the Bank know what gold *it* has out? It has none out; for, the moment it is out, it no longer belongs to the Bank. It belongs to those who hold it. It is not compelled to return to the Bank again; on the contrary, it can be dormant in hoard, or it can pass out of the country, as it is passing at this very moment in part. However, supposing the whole of the circulating medium of the country to be as great in amount as it was in the year 1792. I do not believe that it is so great; and I do not believe that, with gold-payments it can be kept to any thing like the amount of 1792, when France was inundated with assignats, and when England had got possession of a great part of its gold. The Bank Directors seem to forget the immense quantities of gold and silver that were circulating in England in the year 1792, of the amount of which quantities they can have no knowledge. But, gentlemen, this is the point that I am now coming to. Suppose, for sake of the argument, that the paper and coin now circulating, are equal in amount to the whole of the circulating medium in 1792. Let us adopt that proposition; but, before we conclude therefrom that the prices, as acted upon by the currency, ought to be as high as in the year 1792, we must see what effect taxes have upon this combined influence of currency and prices. The general prices of a country must bear a proportion to the amount of the whole of the currency of the country, compared with the number and amount of transactions in that country. It is very clear, I think, that, if the transactions be to the amount of a hundred pounds, they must require a greater quantity of currency (general prices being the same), than if the transactions of the country amounted to only ninety pounds. Now, observe, then, the taxes are four times as great in amount as they were in 1792. Taxes are wholly pecuniary transactions; they require a portion of the currency to carry them on; and, of course, the present taxes withdraw from the employment in other transactions a considerable portion of the present currency; at least, they withdraw in that way, four times as much as they did in the year 1792; so that, that which they tell us about the quantity of circulating medium that they have out, amounts to just nothing at all; unless it be this, that they have out, more than they are likely to keep out; seeing that at this very moment, the gold is going out of the country, and seeing that to keep any of it here more of the paper must be drawn in.—We have nothing, therefore, in any thing that these persons advance, to induce us to expect a rise of prices. And it is manifest to me that the farmers ought, and as quickly as possible, to disencumber themselves of what must eventually be their ruin. Rent, however, is not the only thing to which the farmer has to look. The *tithes* form a very considerable portion of his outgoings; and, as I have shown in a recent

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publication addressed to the farmers' wives, the parson now receives not only a tenth of the crop, but a tenth of the taxes expended to get the crop; so that he receives his crop tax-free; and has a decided advantage over the landlord. If the present thing could go on to its utmost extent, the parsons would still be doing very well, a long time after the landlords would be in the poor-house; and though, considering what has been the conduct of the greater part of the landlords, we might be disposed to care very little about this; still it would be a result very little consonant with justice; seeing that the war, which has been the occasion of those enormous taxes which are now producing all the evils of the country, was in no small degree the work of the clergy themselves. It was a war, we were told ten thousand times over, for our "*Holy Religion.*" No one can deny this; it was asserted in the Parliament, in the King's proclamation, from the bench, from the pulpit, and at every corporation festival, till it almost became a crime to doubt the fact. Now, gentlemen, there are few of us, perhaps, who would not draw our swords in the cause of religion, if we could be made to understand how the cause of religion can be assisted by swords and powder and ball. But how stands the case. The French people, galled and ground down for ages by insolent petty tyrants called seigneurs, who had the power of hanging up men without judge or jury, and of sending them to the galleys for killing a partridge or a hare; the French people, compelled not only to pay a hundred fold in tax for their salt, but compelled also to use, on pain of whipping and imprisonment, a certain quantity of salt in a year in each family; the French people, starved and tormented by an insolent aristocracy, and lazy, gormandizing, and profligate fraternities of priests, at last rose upon their old government; and one of their first acts was the *annihilation of tithes.* Then it was that the French Revolution became so detestable! Then it was that war became necessary for the preservation of what was blasphemously called our Holy Religion! Not a word was said about making war to *preserve tithes.* Not a word was *said* about this; but, as to go to war, as to use broad swords, pistols, and other weapons, against a disbelief in the gospel, seems so very unnatural a way of going to work, is it very astonishing if there were men, who saw the clergy the most zealous in urging on the war, which they were, from the beginning to the very close of it; is it astonishing, if there were men who seemed to believe that the preservation of tithes ought to have been substituted for the preservation of religion as the motive for the entering upon that war, of which we are now feeling the consequences?—It seems to be rather unfair, therefore, that the parson should be now receiving his income tax free, while it must be evident to every rational man that the landlord will shortly be receiving no income at all. But, this is not so much a matter of ours; it is a question between landlord and parson, thus far; and what I wish you to keep in view is, the

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question between the farmer and the landlord.—That the taxes are the cause of the distress is now a pretty general opinion. It is the decided opinion of Lord GREY and Lord KING; and I have no hesitation to say, that, as far as I am able to judge, they are better authority than all the rest of the two Houses put together. I think it has been clearly proved by myself that the taxes are the cause of the distress; and, as the landlords have the power of reducing the taxes, if the burthen remain it is but just that they should bear it. Mr. Wodehouse seems satisfied with the shilling a bushel taken off the tax on malt. Let Mr. Wodehouse, then, bear the remainder of the taxes. If he will make no exertions to obtain the only relief that can be given, let him not endeavour to get from the farmer that capital which is all he possesses in the world. There have been enough of the landlords to talk with great boldness out of doors; but in doors they have been as gentle as doves. Be the consequences on them, therefore, and not upon the families of the farmers. The fact is, however, that they do not wish the consequences to be on them. They wish to get rents; much higher rents than in 1792.—Though the prices at this moment are far below those of 1792, and though the taxes are four times as great as in 1792. They wish the farmer to become a lower sort of person. They wish him to live with more frugality; to come down and to save out of himself and his family for the purpose of paying them. That Bill of Fare; that *Buckingham Bill of Fare*, which you have very judiciously toasted as a warning to English farmers, may very fairly be considered as the scale to which the landlords wish to reduce you. The noble person who has favoured the community with that scale must be looked up to as very competent authority in the case. Had he been born a Duke, indeed, we might not have been disposed to pay so much attention to his scale; but, having recently been made a Duke, we must look upon him as a person in whose wisdom the King's ministers have very great confidence. We must suppose that his opinions as to all public matters are in accordance with theirs; being then told by this noble person that one pound of red sugar is the quantity sufficient for a week in the family of a farm of four hundred acres, we have before us a very good standard, whereby to guage that depth of degradation to which the farmers must expect to fall, and in which they are expected to be contented. This two ounces and *almost* a quarter of red sugar a-day ought never to be for one moment absent from the mind of any single farmer in England. He ought to think of it every time that rent comes athwart his mind; and, let him remember, that even lower than this will be his state if he continue to pay rent for any considerable time longer. The lowering of rents is one of the means by which the farmers have been led on to their ruin. As a sharper lets the inexperienced gamester win now and then a trick, till the former comes and sweeps away his last shilling, so the crafty landlord entices on the farmer till he has got the power of

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distraint, and then he comes and leaves him without even bread to put in his mouth. There is a noble exception in Lord Fitzwilliam, who gave up forty-five per cent. at once; but, even that noble lord will very soon see that his generosity, or, rather his justice, will be wholly unavailing without a reduction of the taxes. The Duke of Buckingham, whose Bill of Fare we have done ourselves the honour to toast, has recently had a meeting of his tenants at his great mansion at Stowe in Buckinghamshire, where he told them that he and they must stand or fall together; I have noticed this elsewhere; but I will again say, that that farmer must be a very great fool, who will have any share in the falling. The landlord has the power, if he had the will, to save himself; but if he will not do that, is the farmer bound to fall with him. The language of such landlords is plainly this: "You "keep paying me rent, till you "are a beggar, and then we will "*fall together.*" "No, no:" I should say; "I will keep what I "have got; you have the power "to stand if you will, and to "enable me to stand too; and if "you will not do this, fall by "yourself, for I am sure I will "not fall with you."—Gentlemen, it being so clear that the landlord must finally lose his estate, unless the taxes be very greatly reduced, one naturally wonders why the landlords do not cause such reduction. Pretty generally speaking they went to London, at the beginning of the winter with the resolution of causing taxes to be reduced. But, they were speedily talked over. Various means may have been employed to nullify their previous resolutions; but the main argument, be you assured, has been this; that, to enfeeble the executive government must be productive of a state of things which would give the common people great power in the electing of Members of Parliament; and that this power would bring down the landlords and their families from that state of loftiness, that species of imperial sway in which they have long lived. In short, that every thing must go on as it is going on, or that there must be a Reform of the Parliament. This is the argument which has, I am quite convinced, induced the landlords to give up their resolutions and to try time and patience a little longer. Hence it is clear that we have no Reform of Parliament to expect as long as rents can be extracted from the capital of the farmer; and, I am very much afraid that, in too many cases, they will be extracted as long as there is any capital left. Mr. Webb Hall now sees this, too; for he, who has given the farmers so much bad advice, is now giving them the advice which I have so long been giving! From his presidential chair at Henderson's Hotel, this mighty king of clubs has sent a circular to his affiliated associations. In this circular, which he directs not to be put into print, and which, therefore, I have not yet caused to be printed, he advises them to give *notices to quit* in whole bodies; by whole districts; but, at the same time, being a very loyal man, and a strict observer of the laws, he advises them to take special care not to commit the crime of illegal combination

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or conspiracy! I approve very much of this advice; but, this advice from Mr. Hall comes rather late; and, if it had not been for his trickery and quackery, thousands of farmers would have saved themselves from ruin by quitting those farms which they have held in consequence of the false hopes with which he buoyed them up by his ridiculous schemes. The removal of the taxes being now the only hope, what hope is there of obtaining that removal except by a Reform of the Parliament? We have seen how vain it is to hope for complete redress through any other means; and I must confess that we ought to derive great pleasure from the reflection that the absolute necessity of a Reform has found its way into the minds of the farmers. This is a new circumstance in the history of the cause of Reform: and, it has produced a new kind of language on the part of its enemies. Formerly, when none but the labouring classes called for Reform, we were answered by the observation, that the respectable part of the community did not want it; that it was not wanted by the *enlightened Yeomanry;* and, while the Ministers were calling for the Six-Acts, Lord Liverpool observed, that that respectable part of the community, that most valuable description of persons, called the middle class, and especially the Yeomanry; that this valuable body was *perfectly sound.* That is to say, *sound asleep;* still, quiet, contented, staggering along like the ass of Issachar, between two burdens, and uttering not a sigh in the way of complaint. However, even this *sound* body begins to move at last; and now what do they say to us? Why Mr. Gooch calls a county meeting a populace; and Lord Castlereagh appeals from eight thousand petitioners of Suffolk, to the *education of the country!* So, in the county of Suffolk, though there be noblemen, gentlemen, freeholders, tradesmen, farmers, manufacturers; though the eight thousand names be all put down upon paper, this Lord can find amongst them no portion of the education of the country. To what end, then, have they been educating us for the last twenty or thirty years. To what purpose have they expended millions upon books and paper and pens and ink and masters and mistresses to teach us. For twenty long years they go on with their national schools, Lancaster schools, ink-schools, sand-schools, Sunday-schools, week-day schools, day-schools and night-schools; they boast all the while at what a rate they are enlightening our minds; and at the end of twenty years, they can find in eight thousand persons of the opulent and most beautifully managed county of Suffolk, not the smallest portion of the education of the country; and to find that education we must seek it amongst those, who first told us that Bank Restriction Acts were the salvation, and then that they were the destruction of a country; who at one time declared by solemn resolution, passed by a thundering majority, that the paper-money was not depreciated; and who afterwards as solemnly declared that it was depreciated at the time when they declared it was not; who at one time declared that the distress

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arose from a superabundance of food, and the next year declared that it arose from a superabundance of mouths, and who have now declared again, that it arises from a superabundance of food, while one Scarlett has a project for checking the increase of mouths. Here are the proofs of the education of the country. We must be able, gentlemen, to bring ourselves up to this point, before it can be tolerated in us that we should pretend to possess any thing worthy of the name of education. One of the educated told us that it was only a "sudden transition from war to peace;" another, that the "sun of prosperity had only hid his head behind a cloud," and would speedily re-appear with all his wonted splendour. Of remedies they have afforded us abundance: corn-bills; digging holes one day and filling them up the next; lending money on the mortgaged poor-rates; and, lastly, it is, we are told, proposed to purchase up corn with the public money, to give the farmer a higher price now, and, of course, a lower price at some future time; giving him for *gain* by the transaction, a fair share of all the expenses attending it. This is the *education* of the country. This is what is to be attended to, while the petitions of those who were formerly called the enlightened yeomanry are to be cast aside as proceeding from what Mr. Gooch calls a populace.---But, let us not be borne down by talk of this description; let not the yeomanry, because they are called a populace, believe that they ought not to be attended to. There wants nothing but a hearty co-operation on the part of the farmers in any one county of England to produce that reform, without which this country cannot be saved from utter confusion. Had Webb Hall's associations all petitioned for a Reform of the Parliament, we should have had it before now; and we shall have it now, if the yeomanry of any one county will come forth boldly and demand it. I do not mean upon their pretty horses and with swords by their sides; I mean, come forth with their petitions to Parliament, describing their distress, attributing that distress to taxation, declaring that they have no hope of a reduction of taxation without Reform, and thereon grounding a prayer for reform as the sole means of enabling them to continue their agricultural pursuits; but, above all things, saying to the landlords, give us reform, join us in the cause of reform, or take your lands to yourselves. This is the way; and if the farmers of any one county of England would but pursue it, they would save themselves and save their country; untoward as the circumstances of the times are in other respects, they give us hope of witnessing exertions like these. The distress of the farmers has greatly weakened the ties between the landlord and parson. When a man is making a fortune by a farm, he cannot be expected to talk very boldly to the landlord. A low bow is a small sacrifice when attended with considerable gains. But, when a man is losing by his farm, when he is coming to the state of the Buckingham Bill of Fare, and has, of course, but one miserable hat to his head, it is not worth while to

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wear that out, by pulling it off to a man to whom he is paying his last shilling. A farmer is not disposed to put up with much rating and scolding from the landlord that is pocketing his capital. The latter may tell him to walk instead of ride; to pull off the coat and put on the smock-frock; to make his wife trudge to church in the dirt instead of riding in a gig; and I have heard of a landlord who had the modesty to tell his tenants, that they ought not only to do all this, but that *their fathers used to be glad to wear his father's old wigs.*---Now, gentlemen, an old wig is a very nasty thing; and if I were a tenant, I would wear no landlord's old wig; but keep the remainder of my capital to myself; and that would soon reduce him to a state to wear his own old wigs till they wasted from his head by degrees or had their place supplied by a woollen cap served out to him by the master of the poor-house. To which state I most sincerely wish every Landlord to come, who still harbours the unjust desire of withholding from the people at large their undoubted right to have a voice in choosing those who make the laws affecting their property and their lives.

After this, and upon the following toast being given, "May the "man whose daily bread depends "upon his labour never want "employment," Mr. COBBETT resumed: pray, gentlemen, permit me, as there are no labourers here present, to say a word or two respecting their case. It is very much the fashion to ascribe the great amount of poor rates to what is called the idleness, drunkenness, and profligacy of the labouring people. How comes it that the character of the common people of England can have undergone this astonishing change? We see the cultivation of the lands greatly increased in neatness, in beauty, and in excellence of all kinds; and, all this while we hear those who perform the labour of those fields, described as idle, drunken, and profligate, and as unworthy of enough to keep them from starving, out of the produce of those very fields. Again and again (for it never can be too often repeated) let the farmer recollect, that of whatever he pays in the shape of wages, nearly one-half goes, not to the comfort of the labourer, but is carried by him to be delivered up to the taxgatherer. Surprising, indeed, and most detestably unjust, that while between fifty and sixty millions are raised in taxes, and while a large portion of this comes out of the earnings of the labourer, the misery produced by that taxation should be ascribed to his idleness, drunkenness, and profligacy; and that, too, when it is notorious that he drinks water, where his less laborious grandfather drank good ale. Evidence of this was produced before the Agricultural Committee; but this was too *trifling* a circumstance for that Committee to mention in their Report! Manifold are the schemes that have been and that are on foot to remedy this *evil*, as it is called, of poor rates; and there is a lawyer of the name of *Scarlett*, who had a project for refusing relief to every man able to work, whether he could get work or not; and also for refusing relief to every married man and woman and

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their children, if the marriage took place, after the adoption of the project. You express your astonishment and horror, and well you may, at the very mention of a project like this; for you well know that the bare promulgation of it would produce consequences, such as, in the present state of the country, I do not think proper to describe. But I never can hear of this project, much less can I mention it, without expressing my indignation at observing, that these projectors, that are so eager to check the breeding of the labourers, who pay so large a portion of the taxes, never propose to check the breeding of those who live upon the taxes. There are about twenty thousand parsons, besides all the placemen, pensioners, sinecurists, granters, half-pay, army, navy, commissaries, quarter-masters, commissioners, taxgatherers, and lawyers, not a few, who are some way or other in the pay of the government. These are not only gentlemen and ladies themselves, but are all engaged in breeding gentlemen and ladies; for none of their children are ever to work; and not a soul of them ever will work as long as these taxes are collected. God knows how many *Knights* the war for religion has given us. And do you think that Sir Charles and my lady's sons and daughters will *work*? Not they, indeed, as long as they can get the means of living without work out of the taxes. It is a new thing in England, that even parsons' sons and daughters must necessarily be gentlemen and ladies. These sons used to be bound apprentice to trades, and their daughters become milliners, mantua-makers, and upper servants. But now, all must have *situations*, which means something out of the taxes, in some shape or other. When parsons' sons were apprenticed to trades, the labourer drunk his ale by his own fire side. The taxes then amounted to six millions a year or thereabouts, and now they amount to fifty-six millions! We hear an everlasting grumbling about the money given to the labouring poor; but we hear not a word of grumbling about the many hundreds of thousands of pounds, voted by the House of Commons for the relief of the poor Clergy of the enormously rich Church of England. While two livings are frequently given to one man, and while he as frequently resides upon neither, but carries away the produce from the spot where it is raised, to spend it in London, Bath, Brighton, or France. Gentlemen, when we are thinking or talking of the case of the labourers, let us make that case our own, and reason on it accordingly. There are, perhaps, many in this room, with whom it has been merely accidental, that they are not labourers themselves. It is so with me, at any rate. If I had happened to marry in the country where I was born, in all human probability I should have been a labourer at this day; and if the pressure of taxation had been such (and that would have been the case) as to disable me to maintain my family without resorting to parish relief; should I have felt no resentment swell in my bosom at being branded with the name of pauper, and at being called idle, drunken and profligate, while a large portion of the fruit of my sweat went to pay taxes imposed

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by persons in the election of whom I had not been suffered to have a voice? If I should have felt in this way, why are not others thus to feel? And would it not be baseness and cruelty in me to endeavour to stifle in the bosoms of others, feelings which I could not have stifled in my own? The farmers, be you assured, will and must, in a short time, perceive, that they and the labourers have one common and inseparable interest. Here the connexion is natural and indissoluble; and you will find, day by day, from this day forward, that the farmers will become convinced of the truth of what I now say. To be farmers without having labourers is impossible. The latter must and will have food; the present struggle that is going on is this:—the farmer is endeavouring to screw from himself, from his wife, from his family, from his labourers, the means of paying the rent demanded by the landlord. This he cannot accomplish, even at the expense of being hated and despised; and the sooner he gives up the struggle the better. With landlord or with labourers he must break; with one or the other he must be at enmity, if the taxes be not reduced; and when he looks about him; when he takes a moment to consider, can he fail to see, that, let come what will, he ought to desire to have the good wishes of his neighbours, and particularly of his labourers?

Lord COCHRANE's health having been given, Mr. Cobbett again rose, and observed, that he was, and always had been, perfectly convinced, that that gallant Lord was wholly innocent of the pretended crime laid to his charge; to which, said he, let me add, that the country owes more to Lord Cochrane than to any Member of Parliament that I have ever known. To him we owe that famous list of sinecures and pensions, which, for the last fourteen years have furnished such ample means of exposing the system. The motion by which that was obtained was suggested, and, indeed, was drawn up by me. I had urged the making of that motion to every Member of Parliament that I knew or that I could come at. But I never found any one that would make that motion but my Lord Cochrane. And for making that motion, if he had never done any other good in his life, he would have merited the lasting gratitude of his country.

The venerable Major Cartwright.

Mr. Hunt, Mr. Wooler, and the rest of the brave men, who are, or have been, suffering in prison in the cause of Parliamentary Reform.

May the Tabernacles of Corruption be swept by the Broom of Reform.

Mr. Southwell, Mr. R. H. Gurney, Mr. Heagren Gibbs and Mr. Alderman Springfield, were successively drank with applause.

Success to the Greeks in their struggle for independence.

Civil and Religious Liberty all over the World.

The Bishop of Norwich.

Mr. SPANTON, of Attleborough, on his health being drunk, returned thanks. He declared he was proud of the political principles he always entertained, and which had been, since he knew the meaning of politics, those of Mr. Cobbett. He begged leave to propose a toast which he was sure would have the approbation of all present; but before he gave the toast he intended to have the

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honour of proposing, he felt peculiarly called upon to make a few observations with regard to the conduct of Mr. Anson, one of the Members for Yarmouth, whose name he regretted never to have seen in the lists of the Minorities which had supported Mr. Hume in his endeavours to effect Economy and Retrenchment. (Hear, hear.) In the election of Mr. Anson great exertions had been made by the friends of Reform, in the hopes that that cause would have his support; and he (Mr. S.) had aided, all in his power, his friend Mr. Palmer and others, to effect the return of that gentleman. What was his disappointment, however, that the return hitherto made by Mr. Anson to his constituents had been, to say the least of it, that of the grossest negligence? He hoped that the conduct of Mr. Anson would not escape the reprehension of Mr. Palmer and the other Electors of Yarmouth who had been so instrumental in his election, and for his own part stated his determination not again to give that Gentleman his support, if the past were to be a specimen of his future conduct.—Mr. Spanton then gave,—

Mr. Hume and the Minorities in the House of Commons who have supported that Gentleman in his arduous and laudable endeavours to effect Economy and Retrenchment.

"Our Worthy Chairman," was drank with three times three. Mr. Clarke returned thanks.

The evening was spent with the most uninterrupted good humour to a late hour, and the despondency to be expected from the prospect threatened by the Buckingham Bill of Fare was by no means visible.

AGRICULTURAL REPORT.

Report from the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Allegations of the several Petitions presented to the House in the last and present Sessions of Parliament, complaining of the distressed State of the Agriculture of the United Kingdom.

The Select Committee appointed to inquire into the allegations of the several Petitions which have been presented to the House in the last and present Sessions of Parliament, complaining of the distressed state of the Agriculture of the United Kingdom, and to report their observations thereupon to the House;

CONSIDERED that among all the important objects referred to them, none could be more deserving of their earliest attention than an inquiry into any measures that could be suggested for affording some temporary relief to the distresses of which the numerous Petitioners with so much reason complain, and which appear, from the returns of the average prices of corn during the late weeks *, to be progressively increasing rather than diminishing.

Your Committee do not venture to determine, whether the present state of the corn-market be owing to an excess of production, or to what extent that excess may reach, beyond the usual and requisite supply; or whether the necessities of the occupiers of land cause an unprecedented eagerness to dispose of their produce at almost any price; but it appears

* Prices, 16 March . 45. 11.
9 . 46. 10.
2 . 46. 11.
23 Feb. . 47. 7.
The highest price of any one week, in 1822, was 50s. 7d.

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from an official Return, that the quantity of British wheat and oats (but not of barley) sold in Mark-lane, between the 1st November and 1st March last, has very considerably exceeded the quantity sold in the corresponding months of the twenty preceding years.

Such an excess of supply beyond demand can have no other effect than to continue the depression of price, and increase the accumulation of the stock upon hand; while it is evident, from the present very low rate of price on the continent of Europe, as compared with prices in this country, that there is no chance of resorting to the natural expedient of relieving the market by exporting any portion of our own corn, even with the aid of any bounty which would not be excessive.

Two other modes have therefore been under the consideration of your Committee; by the first of which it was proposed, that one million of Exchequer Bills should be applied to purchasing, through the agency of Government, and laying up in store, a certain portion of wheat grown in the United Kingdom; and by the second, that facility and encouragement should be offered to individuals to deposit a part of their stock in warehouses, so that they might not be forced to come into the market simultaneously, and under the disadvantage of excessive competition, but might be enabled to wait until the supply, having approached nearer to the wants of the consumers, might afford, if not a remunerating, at least a price somewhat less ruinous for their produce.

With regard to the first of these proposals, the general objections against making the public, through the Executive Government, a dealer and speculator in corn, the suspicions to which it might give rise, and the uneasiness in the public feeling, which it might eventually excite, the danger of its being drawn into precedent, the claims which it might be supposed to give to other important articles of domestic produce, whenever they might be exposed to similar depression, and the universal rule of allowing all articles, as much as possible, to find their own natural level, by leaving the supply to adjust itself to the demand, discourage your Committee from recommending it, even under this extraordinary emergency, and with all the guards and qualifications of a temporary expedient. But with regard to the second, although much less efficacious in its operation, the objection of Government becoming a purchaser does not apply, as individuals would in this case act for themselves, and according to their own discretion, the Government interfering no otherwise than by making advances upon the commodity deposited, which would be repaid, with a low rate of interest, as soon as the article should be brought to market.

For effecting this object, two different modes have been suggested; by one of which it was proposed, that when the weekly average price is under 58s. (the import scale remaining as at present) wheat should be stored, subject to a monthly allowance of 6d. per quarter, until the average price should reach 65s.

The whole quantity not to exceed 600,000 quarters, and the time for which the allowance should be payable not to exceed 12 or 18 months.

Not more than a certain number of quarters, nor less than another specified number of quarters, to be stored on the part of any individual or firm.

The owner of the corn, so deposited, to be at liberty to withdraw it at any time, waving his claim to allowance, or refunding it.

The other proposition was, That for the purpose of relieving the glut which at present presses upon the grain-market, the Government, whenever the average price of wheat shall be under 60s. should grant advances of money upon such corn of the growth of the United Kingdom, as should be deposited in fit and proper warehouses upon the River Thames, and in the ports to be hereafter spe-

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cified, to an extent not exceeding two-thirds of the market value of such corn; the quality of the corn and the fitness of the warehouses, to be approved of by officers to be appointed by the Government.

The loan to be at the rate of 3 per cent. and the period of deposit not to exceed 12 months.

The corn to be withdrawn at the will of the depositor, upon payment of the interest, warehouse rent, and other charges.

The sum of one million so applied, would probably be fully adequate to give a temporary check to the excess which is continually poured into the already overstocked market.

If the House should be inclined to agree with your Committee in countenancing the latter of these propositions, it is evident that it ought to lead to some immediate proceeding; and although no very great effect can be contemplated from adopting it, its operation, as far as it may extend, can hardly fail to afford some temporary relief.

There is another measure also to which it is fit to call the early attention of the House.

The foreign grain and flour of all sorts in different warehouses under the King's lock, appears to have amounted on the 5th of January last to 897,136 quarters; with regard to which, although there is little probability that it can soon come into competition with our home produce, yet it still hangs over the market in a formidable mass, ready to be poured in at once, creating no small degree of panic as to its future operation, and invested with a sort of claim (which is of the utmost importance) to be brought out free from duty, whenever the ports shall be opened under the existing law, even supposing any duty shall be imposed by Parliament, under an alteration of that law, upon all corn hereafter to be imported from foreign parts.

To relieve the market from both these inconveniences, it may be proper to permit the holders of such corn now in warehouses under certain adequate regulations and restrictions, to have the same ground into flour for the purpose of exportation; and also to provide, by legislative enactment, that in future any foreign corn warehoused in this kingdom shall be considered as corn coming from abroad, and subject to all such duties and regulations as are or may from time to time be imposed upon corn coming directly from a foreign port.

A proposition, which was submitted to your Committee, for advancing loans to parishes on the credit of the rates, appeared to be attended with so many difficulties, and to be so little applicable to the purpose of alleviating the distresses which are complained of, that they do not deem it necessary to enter into any examination of it, nor to lay it before the House.

Much as your Committee lament, that so little prospect of immediate relief can be held out to the urgent distresses which have been submitted to their anxious consideration, they think it material to obviate and counteract any unfounded alarm which may have been, either casually or industriously, circulated, that there was ever the least intention entertained by your Committee, of rendering the present condition of the British cultivators worse than it is under the existing law; and they therefore submit, with great confidence, to the House, that the Act of the 55th of the late King, c. 26, which regulates the importation of foreign corn, ought to continue in force until the average price for wheat shall be 80*s.* per quarter, and other kinds of grain in proportion.

It is impossible to carry protection further than monopoly; and it cannot be denied, that this monopoly the British grower has possessed for more than three years, that is, ever since February 1819, with the exception of the ill-timed and unnecessary importation of somewhat more than 700,000 quarters of oats, which took place during the summer of 1820. It must be considered fur-

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ther, that this protection, in consequence of the increased value of our currency, and the present state of the supply of corn combined with the prospect of an early harvest, may, in all probability, remain uninterrupted for a very considerable time to come.

But for the purpose of obviating the dangers in which this law can hardly fail, sooner or later, to involve the cultivators of the soil, and in conformity to the reasoning contained in the Report of the Committee of the last Session upon the same subject, some material change must be contemplated; your Committee, therefore, cannot avoid suggesting, whether, under a full view of all the circumstances, it may not be the duty of Parliament to turn its immediate attention to the ruinous consequences which must follow an unlimited importation and free sale of the surplus produce of the whole agricultural world, which is known at this time to be in a state of glut, at least equal to what prevails within this kingdom, no less impatient for, and unprovided with a market, with a commodity raised at much less charge than our own, which the proprietors would be ready to sell even at a considerable loss, rather than not dispose of it at all.

The excessive inconvenience and impolicy of our present system have been so fully treated, and so satisfactorily exposed in the Report already alluded to (p. 10 and 12), that it is unnecessary to do more than refer to it; adding only, that every thing which has happened subsequent to the presentation of that Report, as well as all our experience since 1815, has more and more tended to demonstrate how little reliance can be placed upon a regulation which contains an absolute prohibition up to a certain price, and an unlimited competition beyond that price; which so far from affording steadiness to our market, may at one time reduce prices already too low still lower than they might have been even under a free trade, and at another, unnecessarily enhance prices already too high; which tends to aggravate the evils of scarcity, and render more severe the depression of prices from abundance.

The mode in which these excessive inconveniences may receive some modification (laying for the present out of the question what permanent basis may be ultimately the fittest for our corn trade) appears to consist in the imposition of a duty upon all foreign corn, whenever upon opening our ports it should be admissible for home consumption. The occupier of the land would thus obtain, in proportion to the amount of such duty, a protection, which is withheld from him under the existing law; but in return for such protection, it is no more than reasonable towards the consumer, that the import price should be fixed at a rate somewhat lower than 80*s.* because the new duty would otherwise not only check the sudden and overwhelming amount of import, but also enhance the price beyond that which it might reach under the present system; nor must it be lost sight of in any future regulation, that owing to the great alteration in our currency, 80*s.* may and do now represent a different and considerably higher value than in 1815, as measured by the price of all articles of consumption.

Should Parliament decide to legislate during the present Session, your Committee would recommend, that after our wheat shall have reached 80*s.* whenever circumstances, not now to be foreseen, may have effected so great a change, a lower price may be assumed for the future import, subject to a duty.

When the importers know that their grain can in no case come into the market without paying a certain sum as duty, besides the charges of importation, warehousing, and other incidental expenses, they will be less ready to adventure rashly than under an entirely free trade; they will also withdraw their corn which may be lodged in warehouses gradually, and with more circumspection than they

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do at present, and will naturally endeavour to feed the market rather than inundate it. It is now their interest to take their whole stock, immense as it may be, at once from under the King's lock; but when they must pay duty for every quarter which is removed, they will prudently calculate the time that any large stock may remain on hand before they can dispose of it to advantage.

The foundation of any future Bill should be the principle of so far modifying the operation of the existing law as to obviate, as far as may be, by the imposition of reasonable duties upon the admission of foreign grain for home consumption, the sudden and irregular manner in which such foreign grain may now be introduced upon the opening of the ports under circumstances inconsistent with the spirit and intentions of the law.

For carrying this purpose into effect, it would be expedient, after the ports shall have opened at 80*s.* (subject to a scale of duty hereafter to be fixed) to preserve the principle of an import price at a rate somewhat lower than the existing import price of 80*s.* and your Committee are of opinion, that 70*s.* would not be an improper limit to assign to that price.

That a duty from 12*s.* to 15*s.* should be imposed upon foreign wheat for home consumption, when the price is from 70*s.* to 80*s.*

Also, that a duty of 5*s.* should be imposed upon such wheat, when the price is from 80*s.* to 85*s.*; after which the duty should be reduced to 1*s.*

And that a further additional duty of 5*s.* should be imposed upon wheat imported or taken out of warehouse for home consumption, for the three months after the ports open, and when the price is from 70*s.* to 85*s.*

And, for the purpose of rectifying the scale which governs the import, the general proportion which the price of oats bears to the price of wheat, appearing to exceed the proportion which was assumed to exist, when 27*s.* was fixed as the import price of oats, your Committee suggest, that it would be expedient to increase that price so as to bear a more accurate proportion to the price of wheat.

The scale at which barley is estimated appearing to be more correct than that of oats, the same proportion which it now bears to wheat appears fit to continue, under any future alteration of the import prices.

The 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th clauses of the Act, which regulates the importation of corn, make provision for admitting corn, meal, or flour, being the growth, product, or manufacture of any British colony or plantation in North America, for home consumption, when British wheat is at a lower price than 80*s.*; with regard to which colonies, it will be consistent with good faith and sound policy to preserve the same relative preference above foreign corn, in the event of any future alteration being applied to the scale of prices or of duties.

In compliance with an application made to them by several of the owners of the foreign grain now stored in warehouses, your Committee have already recommended, that permission may be granted, under sufficient and adequate regulations, to convert it into flour, and export it in that shape, by which means some portion of this large stock will be carried out of the kingdom, and remove all apprehension that the quantities so ground down can ever enter into competition with our home produce; but in the event of a large portion not being thus disposed of, and still remaining in store, it appears practicable to adopt a method which may render this remainder also advantageous, rather than detrimental in its effect upon the value of British corn, whenever the average price of our wheat shall have risen to 70*s.* and fluctuate between 70*s.* and 80*s.*; for if it be then allowed to be taken out for home consumption, subject to a duty of 17*s.* per quarter, for the first three months, and afterwards to a duty of 12*s.* the interest of the proprietors of this grain will be brought strictly into unison with that of the British agri-

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culturist, and into direct hostility to that of all other importers of foreign grain; so that every endeavour will be resorted to, on their part, to advance the price to 70*s.* that they may liberate their own stock; but to keep it below 80*s.* that they may exclude all foreign competitors. The equitable claim which the holders of the grain, already deposited under the Act of the 55th of the late King, appear to possess, will thus be beneficially preserved to them, and the danger of an immense influx of foreign produce will be mitigated and deferred, if not wholly prevented.

It must, of course, be left optional to the proprietors in question, to avail themselves of this permission, or to abide by the conditions of the existing law, under which they imported; but in the first case, the payment of a moderate duty will enable them, at an earlier period, to enter a market over which they may exercise some controul conjointly with all the dealers in British corn; while in the other, they can hardly expect to stem the torrent of foreign produce poured in upon our existing supply, and the immediate depression of value which must unavoidably accompany it.

If the circumstances of this country should hereafter allow the trade in corn to be permanently settled upon a footing constantly open to all the world, but subject to such a fixed and uniform duty as might compensate to the British grower the difference of expense at which his corn can be raised and brought to market, together with the fair rate of profit upon the capital employed, compared with the expense of production, and other charges attending corn grown and imported from abroad, such a system would in many respects be preferable to any modification of regulations depending upon average prices, with an ascending and descending scale of duties; because it would prevent the effects of combination and speculation in endeavouring to raise or depress those averages, and render immaterial those inaccuracies which, from management or negligence, have occasionally produced, and may again produce such mischievous effects upon our market; but your Committee rather look forward to such a system as fit to be kept in view for the ultimate tendency of our law, than as practicable within any short or definite period. A protecting duty which might at this day be hardly sufficient to guard our home market from the most overwhelming competition, might, when the excessive abundance on the Continent shall have been absorbed, operate against the real wants of this kingdom, and subject the growers, as well as the consumers, to the greatest inconveniences. Years of dearth may again make it indispensable to have recourse to foreign produce for a part of our supply, although in seasons of ordinary plenty it may be hoped that our own agriculture has been so improved and extended, as to secure this kingdom from a state of dependence upon other, and eventually hostile, territories for the subsistence of its population.

Your Committee have felt it their duty, for obvious reasons, to lay, without further delay, before the House, the result of their deliberations; but they would consider that they had omitted a most material part of the task imposed upon them, if they neglected to inquire into the present system upon which foreign corn is warehoused. Your Committee are now engaged in carefully investigating this important subject, and they will not fail to report the result to the House as early as the nature of their inquiry will permit. —1st April, 1822.

My readers will see that I have no room for any comments on this famous REPORT. I will do this Next Week in a Letter addressed to the *Ploughmen*, who have, at any rate, *common sense*.

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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TO

ANY PLOUGHMAN.

On the recent Report of the Agricultural Committee.

Kensington, 10 April 1822.

BROTHER CLODTHUMPER,

I AM about to address you on a subject in which you, as well as all the class of labourers, whether they work on earth or on brass or cotton, or whatever else it may be, are very deeply interested. There are on foot many schemes to *raise the price of corn*; and, one of them I am about to speak to you of. What are the objects of such schemes; whether such schemes ought to be thought of; and whether any such scheme can be effectual; these are matters that I shall consider by-and-by; but, first of all I must give you the history of the origin of the schemes, and explain to you what this Agricultural Committee is.

You know but too well to what an enormous price corn and all sorts of food were raised during the war; you know that your wages did not rise with the rise in that price; you know, that, in 1792, the quartern loaf (in London) was 6½*d.*, and that then you got on an average 9*s.* a week at the lowest; and you know very well, that, when the quartern loaf (in London) got up and kept up at 1*s.* to 2*s.* you did not get, as you ought to have done, 27*s.* a week; but were compelled to live (or rather starve) on from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a week. You saw the farmers and the landlords and the parsons *prosper* all this while; and well they might, for, amongst

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them, and amongst those who were living on the taxes, there was a pretty fair division of what was withheld from you; namely, about 18*s.* out of every 27*s.* that you would have had, had it not been for a paper-money system, by the means of which prices were raised, while the nominal value of the money caused your wages to continue so much lower than they ought to have been. The *prosperity* was a thing continually boasted of; but *you* were not prosperous! *You* did not taste of this "prosperity." You were suffering; and the consequence of which suffering was, that a large part of the working people became *paupers*. It was a strange sight to behold, a Government boasting of the *prosperity of a country*, and the *number of paupers increasing* all the while! I used to tell the Government this. I told it of it almost weekly for a great many years; but, our Government is as strange a thing itself as there is to be found on the face of the earth.

This *prosperity* is a thing, however, that we ought clearly to understand; because we shall presently have to speak of the "*distress*," which has been the cause of that *Report* on which I am about to address myself to you. If all the straw and hay and turnips and oats produced upon a farm were, when turned into dung, to be laid upon *one* of the fields out of the twenty, while the rest were ploughed and mowed and fed constantly without ever being dunged at all, that one field would look very *gay*; it would be very *prosperous*; but would it be a *prosperous farm*? If one of the members of a family take not only his own income but two-thirds of that of ten brothers and sisters, he will make a *fine figure*; he will *shine*; he will be *prosperous*; but will this be a *prosperous family*? And would it not merit the epithet prosperous much more, if every member of the family kept his or her own income or earnings? No doubt the *one* would make a *fine*

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show; and as he would be the only one of the family that would be seen, the *family of Chopstick* would be thought *prosperous*, though nine-tenths of them might be paupers.

Thus was it with this nation, nine-tenths of whom were beggared by the very means that enabled the other tenth to make a grand and brilliant show. This *prosperity* was not, however, to go on without end. The paper-money, not payable in gold, was the cause of it. This it was that puffed up *prices* without puffing up *your wages*; and this it was, which, in this manner, took from the *labouring classes*, actually pinched from their backs and bellies and fires and beds all the means of carrying on the wars and of enriching farmers and landlords and parsons besides. The immense sums, thus pinched from *the millions*, and put into the hands of the *thousands*, made a *grand show*; and this show was called *prosperity*. This prosperity has now changed places with, or, at least, is supplanted by "*distress*." The farmers and landlords and parsons are now in *distress*. Curious enough this too, that as soon as any of you get a little meat to eat; as soon as you begin to *live* a little; as soon as the Government has to announce (which it does) that the *poor-rates are decreasing*; it has to confess, though (it says) with great pain, that the farmers and landlords and parsons are *in distress!* Strange thing, my brother ploughmen, that their prosperity should have increased as poor-rates increased, and now decline as poor-rates decline!

That man must be an idiot, or a landlord, who wants any thing more to convince him, that the boasted prosperity was *false*; that it was merely the effect of *a transfer* of the wages and goods of the *millions* into the hands of the *thousands*; that, in short, all the fine show that has been made, has been merely the result of deductions from the wages of labour; and that not a single pennyworth

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has, *upon the whole*, been added to the valuable things, or property, of the nation.

"Well," say you, as every man of plain sense will, at first thought, naturally say; "Well, but here "is no cause of *distress*, Mr. "Cobbett. The farmers, land-"lords and parsons will, indeed, "*cease to deduct from our wages*; "but, they will *still have their* "*own*. We shall get the wages "that we got in 1792, and they "will get the prices and rents "and tithes that they got then. "We shall want no more poor-"rates than we wanted in 1792: "so that, we have only to forgive "the past, and, please God, "Mr. Cobbett, we shall all do "very well again; and Old "England will once more be the "best country in the world."

COBBETT. Ah! master Clodthumper! But, it is very natural, that you should see the thing in this light. This is a curious sort of a THING, this thing of ours: it puzzles wiser men than you and I are.

CLODTHUMPER. But, surely, I must be right in this. Prices, as I can well remember; I mean prices of corn, are the same as they were in 1792; and, all there is to do is to give us the same wages as in 1792; and then are we not all right again *in a short time?*

COBBETT. Why now, do you get what you got in 1792?

CLODTHUMPER. Yes, I get more.

COBBETT. And are you *as well off* as you were in 1792?

CLODTHUMPER. No: but, then, *all prices are not yet come down.* There is my *salt* which is about *four times* as dear as in 1792; and my *shoes and breeches* and *leggings* and *hedging gloves*; and the *malt* is so dear that I cannot get any yet; and there are my tobacco and sugar and tea, all three times as dear. But, they will all come down, will they not?

COBBETT. I do not know that.

CLODTHUMPER. Oh! If they do not come down, and a great

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many other things, I cannot live upon the wages of 1792; or, if I am compelled to take the wages of 1792, I must *still have part of my weekly pay from the Overseer.*

COBBETT. Thus, then, it depends, it seems, upon these same prices of other things *besides corn.* And, do you not find, now, that *bread*, and even *flour*, are much *dearer* than in 1792, though corn is *no dearer* than in 1792?

CLODTHUMPER. Yes, I do; and that is a cursed shame. But, Mr. Cobbett, you know that millers and bakers are *great rogues!*

COBBETT. They must, then, be *fools* also; for, do you see many of them that get *rich*? Come, I see you puzzle yourself about this matter; and, if you will listen to me for a few minutes, I will explain to you how it is, that with the prices of 1792, you and the farmer and the landlord and the parson may all be in a state of distress *now*, though, in 1792, you were in *no distress at all.* You are not so well off as you were in 1792; the farmer is getting poorer and poorer; the landlord gets little, and will shortly get no, rent; the parson sees his tithes in danger; and yet prices of farm-produce are much about what they were in 1792. Will you listen to me while I explain to you the reason of this?

CLODTHUMPER. To be sure I will.

COBBETT. You have said, that your salt, tea, sugar, tobacco, leather, soap, malt, and you might have added a great many other things, are *dearer* than they were in 1792. Now, all that the farmer and his family consume in this way is dearer also. All his implements are dearer. All that his tradesmen consume is dearer. So that the farmer has not so much left at the end of the year as he used to have. He pinches you as hard as he can, but if he do not give you enough to keep you in wages, he must give it you in poor-rates. He pinches himself and the tradesmen as hard as he can too; but, still he has to pay them a great deal more than

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in 1792. Several farmers were, last year, asked by the Agricultural Committee, whether the *smiths* and *wheelwrights* and *collar-makers* had not reduced their prices. The answer was *very little*; not *in proportion* to the fall in the price of corn, *nor any thing like it*. And, why? Because these people found that salt, soap, candles, tobacco, leather, tea, sugar, malt, and other things *did not fall at all*, though corn did. Nay, they found that even *flour* did not fall to the price of 1792, nor any thing like it! And why not? Because the miller and millwright and all the miller's tradesmen found that their salt, malt and other things *did not fall at all*, though corn and cattle had fallen so much!

Now, then, why do not these, and numerous other things, fall as the corn and cattle fall? This is the point. They cannot fall, because there is a *tax* on them; and that tax *does not fall at all*. The barley is fallen to 2*s.* 6*d.* a bushel; but, there was till the other day 3*s.* 6*d.* a bushel tax on the malt; and there is now 2*s.* 6*d.* tax on the bushel of malt; which, together with excise-expenses and risks, makes up about three-fifths of the whole cost of the malt. Then the salt is, in fact, *all tax* except about *a shilling a bushel*; and, it is now *twenty* shillings a bushel, and was in the year 1792 only about five shillings a bushel. In short, the farmer has now to pay, through the various channels, about *four times as much* in taxes as he had to pay in 1792; and, if his *profits be the same* that they were in 1792, it is clear, that he must pay rent out of *something else than his produce*; for, if he can *now* pay rent out of his produce, the farmer of 1792 must have been getting rich as a Jew; and we all know that he was not.

The fact is, that great numbers of the farmers grew rich *during high prices*; that is to say, as I have shown before, by deducting from the wages of labour and by making the labourers paupers.

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But, these riches soon melt away; and, as a great part of them are already melted, the farmers cannot, in numerous cases, pay any rents at all. This is a pretty smart pull up for the landlord. He, therefore, now feels what is called "*distress.*" You felt it before; but you went quietly to the *poor-house*; and, if the landlord would go *quietly*, we should hear of no such *schemes* as I am about to address you on; but, the landlord will not go quietly to the poor-house: he makes a "*clamour*;" calls aloud for a "*remedy*;" and the *Report*, about which I am going to write to you, contains one of the many *remedies* that have been proposed for purposes of giving him *relief*.

It is curious enough to observe, that when the farmer paid high rent very punctually, and when the deduction from your wages was reducing you to misery the most deplorable, the landlords never thought of any schemes to afford *relief to you!* This is very well worth carrying along in your mind. You know very well, that, since 1792, three-fourths of you have actually *become paupers*; and yet, the nation was said to be, all the while, *increasing in prosperity!* But now, the moment the Landlords begin to feel, though the *millions* are better off, those landlords set up the cry of "*national distress*"! This is well worthy of being borne in mind; though the case is full, from one end to the other, of curious matter.

However, let us now proceed towards the *remedy* contained in the Report, first describing a little this thing called the *Agricultural Report*. You should know, then, that a great number of farmers and landlords have sent petitions to the House of Commons, complaining of their *distress*, and praying for *relief*. The House has, in consequence of those prayers, picked out a portion of the wisest of its Members, and called them a Committee, and ordered them to inquire into these complaints, and to *report* to the House the result of their inqui-

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ries; that is to say, to lay before it a paper, containing the opinions of these picked members as to the nature and extent of the evil, and as to the remedy, if any, which they think ought to be applied. This paper is called the *Report*, and the Committee, in this report, have suggested certain *remedies*, of which I propose to speak to you pretty fully.

You will, doubtless, conclude, at once, that the tendency of the remedy will have a *correspondence* with the cause of the distress. Having seen so clearly, that the farmer is disabled to pay rent by the taxes; having seen that, with prices of 1792 and with taxes four times as great as those of 1792, it is impossible for him to pay the rent of 1792; having, in your own case, experienced, that, with *corn* at the price of 1792, you would actually starve to death with the wages of 1792 if unaided by poor-rates; having seen, in short, that it is *the taxes* that disable the farmer to pay his rent, and that is now *taking down* the landlords into a state that their honours and lordships are pleased to call "*distress*;" having seen this, you will, I dare say, have already concluded, that the Committee, in a case so very plain, have, at once, *recommended the reducing of taxes to the standard of* 1792.

Alas! Brother Clodthumper, little do you know of the wisdom of the nation in its "*Collective*" state! Oh, no! Not a word about reducing taxes: not so much as a single word, or the ten-millionth part of a single hint, as to any such matter. Quite enough, however, about another mode of giving *relief;* namely, by *raising the price of corn!* Now, here we have another curious thing. During the twenty years, or thereabouts, that *you* were suffering from high prices and low wages; during the time that *you* were in a state of half starvation from that cause, we never heard of any schemes for *raising your wages by law!* We heard of schemes, and we saw the laws passed, to prevent you from *combining*, to *punish*

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you for combining, to raise, or even to *keep up*, your wages; we saw laws to *compel* you to make disclosures as to combinations of this sort in which you yourself might have been implicated; but, during, the whole of the twenty years, while your wages were kept down in comparison with the prices of provisions, we never heard of such a thing as any one's thinking, or dreaming, of *a law to raise the price of your labour!* This is something quite *neat:* it has in it no sort of mixture.

But, in the total absence of all thoughts of this kind, there were thoughts enough of another kind respecting you. Pinched so hard by high prices of food and by low wages, you necessarily became what they still called *paupers*, though the character of pauper was merely one in which you received a part of your wages. Hence arose numerous schemes for *docking* you in this quarter; and amongst other schemers, one parson MALTHUS came forth with a proposition to *check the breeding* of labourers! He did not propose a law to *raise the price* of labour. That was not amongst his remedies. Your labour had fallen in price through the means of a base paper-money. No proposition to get rid of this base money. No proposition to raise the price of your commodity, your labour; but, now that the landlords complain of distress, there are propositions enough *to raise the price of the produce of the land!*

Keeping this in our minds, let us approach the scheme for *raising the price of corn*. And here, let me beseech you to bear in mind, that this same parliament has passed laws; or, at least, keeps in force laws, *to prevent corn from rising in price!* "Good God!" You exclaim; "can this be *true?*" Indeed it is. There are laws in full force, that make it *impossible*, that the Winchester bushel of wheat should, on an average of seasons, fetch more than about four or five shillings English money; and, in my opi-

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tion, it is by no means improbable, that the price may, on an average, come down below four shillings. This will depend, in some measure, on what foreign nations shall do as to their money-affairs; but, according to present appearances, it is possible, and even probable, that the price may come down to *three shillings*. I have seen no statement; I have heard no argument, to show why it may not, while I can see many reasons on the other side. However, the laws now in force absolutely forbid the expectation, in the mind of any sane person, of a higher price, on an average of seasons, than the *present price*. And yet, the scheme of the Committee is to *raise the price* by *another law!* I beg you to bear this in mind, and not to disbelieve it, or to doubt of it, because it appears to you, and to common sense, so utterly strange and monstrous; for, you will observe, that *that*, as applied to other times and other persons, would appear absolutely against nature, is natural enough, and, at any rate, strictly true, when applied to these times and these persons.

The scheme for raising the price of corn is as follows. The Committee *assume* that there is "*a glut*" of the market. That *over-quantity of corn* is the cause of the distress. *Why* they assume this, they do not say; but they assume it; and, having assumed it they proceed as follows to state their *remedy for the glut*; though I must here, again, before I quote the Report, state, that there is no reason given by the Committee, and that there is no reason existing, *why* corn should be at a higher price now than it was in the year 1792; and, as to a glut, as to over-production, how monstrous is the idea, when it is notorious that the last crop was *smaller* than the crop before the last, and when it is equally notorious that the price has become much lower *since* that smaller crop was gathered. In the teeth, however, of these notorious facts, this Committee

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propose a remedy for a glut. Having observed, that to export must be impossible, they proceed thus.—

"Two other modes have therefore been under the consideration of your Committee; by the first of which it was proposed, that *one million of Exchequer Bills* should be applied *to purchasing*, through the agency of Government, and laying up in store, a certain portion of wheat grown in the United Kingdom; and by the second, that *facility and encouragement* should be offered to individuals to *deposit a part of their stock in warehouses*, so that they might not be forced to come into the market simultaneously, and under the disadvantage of excessive competition, but might be enabled *to wait until the supply*, having approached nearer to the wants of the consumers, might afford, if not a remunerating, at least a price somewhat *less ruinous for their produce*.—With regard to the first of these proposals, the general objections against making the public, through the Executive Government, a dealer and speculator in corn, the suspicions to which it might give rise, and the uneasiness in the public feeling, which it might eventually excite, the danger of its being drawn into precedent, the claims which it might be supposed to give to other important articles of domestic produce, whenever they might be exposed to similar depression, and the universal rule of allowing all articles, as much as possible, to find their own natural level, by leaving the supply to adjust itself to the demand, discourage your Committee from recommending it, even under this extraordinary emergency, and with all the guards and qualifications of a temporary expedient. But with regard to the second, although much less efficacious in its operation, the objection of Government becoming a purchaser *does not apply*, as *individuals would in this case act for themselves*, and according to their own discretion, the Government interfering no otherwise than by *making advances upon the commodity deposited*, which would be repaid, with a *low rate of interest*, as soon as the article should be brought to market.—For effecting this object, two different modes have been suggested; by one of which it was proposed, that when the weekly average

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" price is under 56*s.* (the import " scale remaining as at present) " wheat should be stored, subject " to a monthly allowance of 6*d.* " per quarter, *until the average* " *price should reach* 65*s.*—The " whole quantity not to exceed " 600,000 quarters, and the time " for which the allowance should " be payable not to exceed *twelve* " *or eighteen months.*—Not more " than a certain number of quar- " ters, nor less than another spe- " cified number of quarters, to be " stored on the part of *any indi-* " *vidual or firm.*—The owner of " the corn, so deposited, to be at " liberty to withdraw it at any " time, waving his claim to al- " lowance, or refunding it.—The " other proposition was, That for " the purpose of relieving the glut " which at present presses upon " the grain-market, the Govern- " ment, whenever the average " price of wheat shall *be under* " 60*s.* should *grant advances of* " *money* upon such corn of the " growth of the United Kingdom, " as should be deposited in fit and " proper warehouses upon the " River Thames, and in the ports " to be hereafter specified to an " extent not exceeding *two-thirds* " *of the market value* of such " corn; the quality of the corn " and the fitness of the ware- " houses, to be *approved of by* " *officers to be appointed by the* " *government.*—The loan to be at " the rate of *three per cent.* and " the period of deposit not to ex- " ceed twelve months.—The corn " to be withdrawn at the will of " the depositor, upon payment of " the interest, *warehouse-rent*, " and *other charges.*—The sum " of *one million so applied*, would " probably be fully adequate to " give a *temporary check* to the " excess which is continually " poured into the already over- " stocked market.—If the House " should be inclined to agree with " your Committee in countenanc- " ing the latter of these proposi- " tions, it is evident that it ought " to lead to *some immediate pro-* " *ceeding*; and although no very " great effect can be contem- " plated from adopting it, its ope- " ration, as far as it may extend, " can hardly fail to afford *some* " *temporary relief.*"

This, as was before observed, is a scheme for *raising the price of Corn.* I shall say nothing about the morality, the humanity, or the justice, of the scheme. I shall consider it as a scheme to answer a *certain end*; and inquire, whether it be calculated to answer that end. The end is, *to*

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enable farmers to pay rents. The present price is called "*ruinous*," and the scheme is intended to obtain for the farmer a price "somewhat *less* ruinous." I should like to know upon what ground it is assumed, that the present is *too low* a price. As compared with *rents, tithes* and *taxes* the price may be *too low*; but, as compared with labour, with wearing apparel, and with other commodities, exclusive of tax, it is *not too low*. The price is now as high as the manufacturer and labourer and artisan can afford to pay. This is what the Committee appear never to have thought of. They have only looked at the defalcations in the *rent-roll*, not recollecting, that it is in consequence of the prices, which produce those defalcations, and *only* in consequence of those prices, that the manufacturers, and hundreds of thousands not coming strictly under that denomination, are enabled to exist. The Committee forget, that, if food were now, with gold in circulation, at a price to enable the farmers to pay the same nominal sums out of the produce that they paid some years back, *starvation* or *convulsion* must be the instant consequence. The Committee seem to have nothing but rents to compare prices with. Let them compare the price of corn with the price of labour, or the price of any *untaxed* thing if they can find such a thing. Let them compare the price of corn with the price of *raw cotton*; or, indeed, let them compare prices of food here with those of food in *France*; and, then, I fancy they will find them *high enough*; and that, if they be *ruinously low*, it is only in comparison with *rents, tithes* and *taxes*.

But, let us look at the scheme a little in detail, and, first, at the first *mode*. A man is to bring a parcel of wheat and it is to be put into a store, provided by the Ministry or persons appointed by them; it is to be locked up; the market price must be under 58*s*. a quarter when it is put in, and it may, at the pleasure of the owner, remain for twelve or eighteen months. He is to receive an advance upon it from the Government to the amount of 6*d*. a quarter a month. When he takes out his corn he is to repay the advances that he may have received on it. Thus, then, if I have a lot of corn I may pawn it, and get an advance upon it, and thus keep it back from market for eighteen months. The pawning of corn, and for a Government to

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be pawnbroker, are things wholly new; but, who did not expect to see even stranger things than this before the breaking up of this monster-creating system!

It does not seem to have occurred to the Committee, that a man might pawn corn not worth more, perhaps, than 30s. a quarter (and a great deal is not worth that sum) and, by keeping it in pawn eighteen months, clear twenty per cent. by the pawning. He might take his wheat out of pawn at the end of eighteen months; and then *put it in again*, unless the law were repealed. From the quantity required to obtain a pawn, it is clear that the great *corn-dealers* would have the whole of the thing in their own hands; and it would be hard indeed if they could not keep the profits to themselves. What is intended is a benefit to the landlords; use of the public money to them for nothing. A gift, a grant, a present *to them*; but, if it go through the hands of Corn-dealers (who are in great part *Quakers*) the landlords must, after all, scramble hard, fight tooth and nail, to get even a taste of the precious donation.

The other of this pair of schemes is a pawn for a sum to be received *at once* from the Government to the amount of *two-thirds* of the *market worth of the corn*, and this worth is to be *settled by officers appointed by the Government!* Gracious God! Here will be pretty goings on! It is useless to attempt to describe the effect of such a scheme; but, it must be precisely what every one like its inventor must want. The *Government* appoint the persons to *value* the corn and *apportion the pawn on it!* Well, after that, is it of any use to offer a comment upon this scheme? It is a deep scheme indeed; and such an one as we have so often seen from the man to whom this scheme is ascribed. Oh! there is nothing like your "*independent country*-gentleman" for the most precious of schemes!

As to the terms of *taking corn out* of warehouse under a law like this, the Parliament need not, I think, trouble themselves about *that!* To *keep* it out will be the difficulty; for, I'll engage it will come tumbling in, at the *valuation* of the "officers *appointed by the Government*"! There can be no obligation to take it out. The nation may *keep the pledge;* and a famous pledge it will be. The pawners will be all "*loyal*" men, I dare say; for, radicals and jacobins will never have the impudence to face "officers *appointed by the Government*"! If this

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scheme go into effect, a *prettier* thing never was played off: no, not even during the disputes about the *union with Ireland*. I think it is likely to be the last grand trick from the budget of the system. There will be enough and enough to get a little *slice of the million!*

The Committee, in their eagerness to check the glut, seem to have overlooked the possibility, not to say probability, of corn being *cheaper* at the end of twelve or eighteen months than it is now! If the next harvest should be a fine one, wheat may be four shillings a bushel, though the 600,000 be locked up. Besides, will it not be *known to be locked up?* Aye, and known, too, that it must come out again into the market. In fact, unless *destroyed*, it must come out *first or last*. In the course of two years it must make its appearance in the market. And, as it must come first or last, must not its effect, first or last, be the same upon prices? *There it is*, ready to come out, and nothing but destruction can prevent it from producing its full effect. *To a people* it may sometimes be of use, in countries of great casualty, for the Government to hold corn in pawn, or to purchase it up; but to *the growers* of corn, and especially in a country like this, it is impossible that such a measure can be productive of good. It is mere delusion; and delusion, too, capable of imposing upon none but very weak persons.

Three per cent. interest is to be paid on the pawn. Now, what is this; what can it be called but a loan of a million at 3 per cent. to corn-dealers in order to induce them to buy up corn, that the price may be raised and that the farmers may be induced to try another year and give up more of their capitals in rent to the landlords? What can it be called but this? The farmers are ready to *start*; and this may retain them, till their last shilling be gone! It is impossible, that any rational man can entertain the hope of the measure producing the smallest ultimate benefit to *the farmer*. It may induce him to keep on a little longer; and that little longer must be his ruin. If, indeed, Peel's Bill were to be repealed in 18 months' time; or if it could be reasonably expected, that any thing to lower the value of the currency would take place, there might be something to say for such a measure; but, the *contrary* of this must be expected. The value of the currency has not yet reached its height; and, if a man

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have debt to pay with the amount of corn, the sooner he pays it the better.

To what a disgraceful state is the system arrived, when such schemes can be entertained! What must the landlords think of themselves, when they contemplate this as a means of affording them *relief!* But, to this and to much worse, much more low and ridiculous, shall we see the thing fall. The scheme of advancing *four millions* is abandoned; but, to something like that we shall return, *unless taxes be reduced.* Farmers will quit in spite of all that can be done; or they will be ruined. Landlords will be unable to continue the cultivation of the land themselves. Yet the land *must be cultivated* and the people fed. The *government* must see to this. It must *lay hold* as *owner* or *trustee.* In what *way,* under what *name,* or *colour,* no one can tell; but, if the present taxes be *enforced,* this, or something very much like it, must be, and will be, the result. How long the thing may stop at that stage no man can say; but, that that will not be the *last stage* we may be perfectly satisfied. We are now, at this moment, in a *revolution* of property, quietly going on. A *more radical* revolution than that of France; and this is seen clearly by all, except those who are most deeply interested in the consequences of the revolution.

The remainder of the Report, as it does not propose any thing *now to be done* in the way of affording what the Committee call relief, is not a thing to occupy much of our time; but, there are certain parts of it not altogether unworthy of notice. It is proposed to allow those who hold *foreign corn* to take it out of warehouse and to *grind it.* For *what?* To be sold and eaten here to be sure; for, as for doing this "for the purpose of *exportation,*" where is the spot of earth in this whole world, to which it could be sent at any thing like so cheap a rate as the people there can get flour manufactured elsewhere? Did it ever yet happen, that wheat was imported and manufactured here, and exported in flour, the trade of the world being *free* at the same time? Never. Why, then, are we to believe that this is the intention now? There can be no doubt at all, that the foreign corn holders would like this; for they know very well the impossibility to prevent them from selling the flour in this country, if they be once permitted to grind the wheat here. And what is to become of

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the *offal?* Is that to be *exported* too? Or is it to be flung into the rivers and ditches and ponds?

This whole quantity of foreign corn, however, about which the Committee make such a to do, and, in their circulating-library style, talk of its "*hanging over* "the market, ready to *pour in* at "once;" of its being made "to "*feed* the market rather than "*inundate* it;" the whole quantity, thus made to *hang* and to *pour*, to *feed* and to *inundate*; the whole quantity thus spoken of in language like that of a girl in her teens writing a letter to her dearest friend at another boarding-school; the whole quantity that hangs like a craggy rock and pours like a stream in one sentence, and that feeds like your plough-boy with the hay under his arm, and comes rolling over like a flood, in another sentence; this whole quantity, which you, brother Clodthumper, would have said, ought to be made to *feed* rather than *cram* the market; this whole quantity, about which there is such a terrible piece of work, is only about enough for *thirteen days' consumption!* This is a pretty cause to produce such important and lasting effects.

The Committee, no less than three times, make use of these words, or words to this effect:— "that foreign corn is *raised at less expense than in this country.*" Do you know, brother Clodthumper, what the Committee may mean by this? I do not, I confess. If a farmer pay his man a penny a-day in France, and if a penny will buy as much food in France as half-a-crown will in England, the corn is raised, as far as labour goes, *as cheap* in England as in France, though the English Farmer pay half-a-crown a-day to his labourer. The Committee view the thing in the wrong light; or rather, they *blink* the main thing altogether. Corn is every where raised at the same *positive expense*, with the difference in soil and climate. It is the relative expense; and that depends upon the taxation altogether. I should like to know, however, what are the notions of the wri er of this Report upon this subject; who the writer is, I cannot tell; but *his* notions upon a matter like this, must, I am sure, be something *very entertaining*.

In one part of the Report, the growers of British corn are encouraged to rely on an *interested combination*, of the importers of foreign corn in their favour. The Report observes that the interest of these proprietors of foreign

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corn, will, by letting them sell in our market when wheat gets up to seventy shillings a quarter, "be brought strictly into unison "with the interest of the British "corn grower, and into *direct* "*hostility* to that of all other im- "porters of foreign corn; so that "every endeavour will be re- "sorted to, on their part to *ad-* "*vance* the price to seventy shil- "lings, that they may *librate* their "own stock, but to keep it below "eighty shillings, that they may "exclude all foreign *competitors*" There only wanted the word *enemies* instead of *competitors* to make this a perfectly military sentence from the beginning to the end. I should tell you, brother Clodthumper, that this is House of Commons writing. It is like no other writing in this world. None that ever was and none that ever will be.

But, as to the matter, it is curious enough, that, while we have, in this part of the Report, such a clever contrivance for squeezing advantage out of the greediness and villany of combined Corn-dealers, we have, directly afterwards, a contrivance equally clever, for the purpose "*of preventing the effects of combination.*" There occur only two clear sentences between the hopes held out as likely to arise from a combination of Corn-dealers for raising and depressing prices, and the advantages likely to be derived from "preventing the effects of combination and speculation" in those very Corn-dealers!

There is one passage more in the Report which I think it necessary to notice. The words are these, "nor must it be lost sight "of, that *owing to the great al-* "*teration in our currency*, eighty "shillings may and do now re- "present a different and *consi-* "*derably higher value*, than in "1815, *as measured by the price* "*of all articles of consumption.*" This is a very curious admission. It has been contended by this description of politicians, and by the ministry especially, that the currency has been raised in value only in the proportion of *four and a half per cent.* But here we have a *great alteration*; here we have a *considerably higher* value; and here we have, *slipped out*, as it were by mere accident, what no one has ever seen before except in my Register, namely, that we are to measure the value of the currency, not by the price of Gold, but by the "*price of all articles of consumption.*" This has slipped out for the first time, in this place; and if the Report had

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contained nothing but this one sentence, it would have been good for something, and bad for nothing.

Few as the words are here, they are of great importance. The Committee was selected by the Ministers, and this one sentence of the report *totally* removes the foundation, upon which they erected the Bill of Mr. Peel. This has been the great question at issue, between the ministry, the parliament, the Scotch Reviewers, and all the Scotch writers and all the English writers that write about such matters, on the one side, and *me*, your brother Clod-thumper, on the other side. They have always contended; this host of dunderheads (I do not mean to include the Parliament, when I talk of dunderheads), this whole host have contended, that the price of gold, as compared with that of paper-money, was the measure or standard of value; that it was by that that we were to know in what degree our currency had risen in value; that it was by that that we were to know the extent of the alteration in the currency. I contended that that was no standard at all; that it could be no standard; that it really had nothing to do with the matter into which we were inquiring; and that the true measure was, the general average price of articles of consumption, and that, if we had a mind to select any one of which, the best was, the average price of the bushel of wheat.

Now, whether the Committee have deliberately, or accidentally, recognised this doctrine of mine as the true doctrine, I cannot say; but, certain it is, that they have here recognised that doctrine most fully; and they have made the recognition, too, in the most ample manner; because they have introduced it as forming part of the basis of a proposed law; and of a law, too, affecting very important interests. Whether they perceived it or not, I am not certain; but here is the axe laid to the very root of the very best argument brought forward by the prime minister, and by his colleague in the other house, in order to prove that the taxes were not the cause of the distress. Their argument was this. In 1813 agriculture was in a state of prosperity. The value of money at that time was a fourth lower than it now is. Since that time a fourth part of the nominal amount of the taxes has been taken off. The taxes, therefore, are now, *no heavier* than they were in that *time of prosperity;* and, *therefore*, it cannot

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be the taxes that now cause the *distress!*

This is conclusive; this is wholly unanswerable; if you admit that the money is now *only a fourth* higher in value than it was in 1813. This has been admitted by every one but myself; and this has been the strong ground of the ministers, and the Scotch Reviewers. Place them upon this ground, and they will beat you for ever upon the question of taxes. However, in this Report, they seem to have abandoned the ground themselves; for, as I observed before, here they have recognised my doctrine; and I only wish I could hope that the rest of the Report would warrant the opinion that this recognition is the forerunner of the return of long absent common sense.

When, however, I look at this Report as a whole; when I consider it as something intended to point out a remedy for those evils which press upon the country; when I consider it as a thing intended to stem the torrent of that revolution in property which is taking place; and especially, when I see it containing not one single word upon the subject of those taxes which are sternly, though quietly, ejecting the farmer, disinheriting the Landlord, and sending the labourer prowling about for food; when I view it in this light; when I find in it for this mass of evils, nothing but a poor miserable scheme for taking corn into pawn; when I see this, I should be weak indeed to place even the smallest degree of reliance upon any thing to be done by an assembly in which such a Report could be received without every mark of contempt; and that it will be received with any mark of contempt, at all, is a great deal more than I expect from that assembly.

I have now done with this Report; but there are some matters very closely connected with it, to which I have now to call your attention; and, if you do attend to what I am going to say, you will understand much more about the cause of the *distress*, as it is called, than this Committee appear to understand.

In London, at this time, the quartern loaf, weighing four pounds and five ounces, is sold for 9½*d.* At Paris, the police has just ordered the price of bread of four pounds to be sold for as much French money as makes 5*d.* of English money. The French pound, is, I believe, two ounces heavier than ours. Thus, then, the bread in London, is nearly as

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dear again as the bread at Paris; and all the world knows that the French bread is the finest of the two. How comes this difference? The wheat in France is no very great deal cheaper than it is in England at this moment; but, the taxes paid by the miller, by the baker, and by all the people that they employ, makes such an addition to the price of the bread in England, that the people in London are compelled to pay so much more for it per pound than they pay at Paris. Here we have the true reason, why people go to spend their English money in France. There are said to be nearly two hundred thousand English persons living in France. Take these at twenty pounds a year a-piece; and here are two millions of money a-year, spent in France, which, were it not for our enormous taxes would be spent in England. So that one evil creates another; and the evils, at last, combine and form a burden that is intolerable. A great part of the English persons in France, live upon the taxes raised in England. Perhaps one-fourth part of them; so that here is money, actually taken away from the Landlords, Farmers and Tradesmen and Labourers and Artisans in England, and carried and given to the subjects of our old enemies the Bourbons to make their people well off and themselves powerful.

But, now let me beg your attention to a comparison, as to the price of bread, at two different periods, in this our own country; and what I am going to say now, I beg you will never forget; but that you will read it over and over again, till you remember every word of it as well as you remember the Belief or the Lord's Prayer. I will put it in a separate paragraph, in order that you may, if necessary, cut it out of my little book and stick it up over your mantlepiece.

The two periods to which I have alluded are 1792 and 1822. Now mind, the average price of wheat in 1792 was 42*s.* 4*d.* the quarter. And the price of the quartern loaf in London was then 6½*d.* Now mind again, the average price of wheat in this year, 1822, is 45*s.* 11*d.* a quarter; and the price of the quartern loaf in London is 9½*d.* Thus, you see, that, though there is very little difference in the price of the *wheat* in the two years, there is almost *one-third* difference in the price of the bread! This seems a wonderful thing. And how is it to be accounted for? Do bakers grow

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rich? Are they not, on the contrary, the poorest of all tradesmen? No: but, when you consider that the corn-dealer, the miller, the flour-merchant, the lightermen, the carters, the bakers, and all the people that all of them have to employ, pay *four times* as much in taxes, as they paid in the year 1792, your wonder ceases that the quartern loaf costs nearly a third more than it cost in the year 1792, though the sum of money which the farmer gets for his quarter of wheat is but very little more now than it was then.

In perfect accordance with this, is the result of the inquiries of a gentleman in Suffolk, a Mr. ROUSE, who has lately published an Essay, in which he has shown, that farmers were formerly allowed, as their share of a quarter of wheat, the price of ninety-six quartern loaves. The quarter of wheat was allowed to make one hundred and four quartern loaves. The price of eight loaves, together with the offal, was allowed to miller and baker for their expenses and profit. Now, ninety-six quartern loaves, at 9½*d.* each, amount to 76*s.* Therefore, according to the old mode of reckoning, the farmer ought to get 76*s.* at this time for his quarter of wheat; and he does get only 45*s.* 11*d.* People cry out; and a very ignorant writer in the County Herald, says that the farmer gets now only about fifty-five quartern loaves, "leaving "the value of fifty-four to the "*rapacity* of traders and corn-"dealers." What rapacity? What vain and silly abuse is this? Corn-dealers and traders, if they profited so very largely from their business, would soon have plenty of others to share in it. Oh! no; This is miserable nonsense. It is all the taxes and all the rates that the traders and millers and bakers and all the persons before mentioned, have to pay; it is these that make the eaters of bread pay more to the manufacturers of it, and that cause the farmer to receive less in proportion.

I have now, I think, made this so clear, that it is impossible for any person, of common understanding, not to comprehend the cause of all those distresses which are harassing the country. Turn the matter which way you will; look at it in whatever direction; and the taxes still stare you in the face as the great and all-pervading cause of the distress. It appears to me the strangest thing in the world, that there

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should be any longer a dispute upon the subject. I believe the conviction to be very general, that the taxes must be speedily greatly reduced, or that a convulsive revolution will be the consequence. This is my own firm persuasion. It remains with the Landlords, and with them wholly and solely to adopt the measures necessary to produce such reduction: if they fail to adopt those measures, I have nothing within my power left, but to offer my best wishes for such final settlement as shall secure the happiness of the Nation; and particularly that of those labouring classes, amongst whom I was born and bred, and to make common cause with whom, has always been, and always will be, the pride and the boast of,

Your Friend,

WM. COBBETT.

WAR.

THE TURKS AND RUSSIANS.

As it seems probable that a war between these despotisms will take place; and as it can hardly take place without producing some considerable practical effect upon ourselves, it may be useful to offer such observations as occur to us, in this early stage of the event, without giving any pledge that circumstances may not arise to alter the opinions founded on the present imperfect view of the matter.

It would be waste of time to pretend to enter into the grounds of the quarrel, and a still greater waste of time, to affect to be able to penetrate all the ultimate views of the parties, or to describe the numerous tricks and intrigues that have been carried on by the bribery and corruption of courtiers and of harlots of quality. To say that the Germans or Russians have had a hand in the thing is enough to make us know that no tongue or pen can give an adequate description of the perfidy and profligacy that have been at work; while, there can be very little doubt, that, in this respect, the Turks are a dead match for the Germans and Russians.

Leaving all these, therefore, to occupy the minds of such as delight in dabbling in the filth and villany of the European Courts, let us take a view of the dispute, and of its probable consequences, in their bearings upon us. Stripped of all the flummery, hypocrisy and pomposity of State papers, the Autocrat of Russia has quar-

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relled with the Turk, because the Turk has adopted some very severe and very ferocious measures towards his subjects of *Greece*, who are Christians of the Grecian church, to which church it pleases the Russian to belong. In what degree the treatment of the Greeks by the Turks, differs from the treatment of a weaker *sister kingdom* by a stronger sister kingdom, which might be named, it may not be so very easy to ascertain, seeing that no precise intelligence appears to have reached this country, as to the particular number of hours, that the Turks suffer the Greeks to be out of their houses, without being liable to be transported for the offence. We have heard of great cruelties practised by the Turks upon the *Catholics* of Greece, and we must abominate the conduct of the Turks; but it is by no means certain that the King of the Cossacks has the most pure objects in view, in his quarrel with these same Turks. In short, that man must be pretty much of a fool who can be made to believe, that it is a love of justice, of humanity, and, above all things, a love of *freedom*, which has put, or is putting, the armies of Russia in movement; such a man must have totally forgotten *Poland*, and, indeed, have forgotten every war in which Russia has ever been engaged.

The parties to this war, then, are, in point of *morality*, and in point of state policy also, perfectly upon a level. And, therefore, the only question with an Englishman is, or ought to be, the *success of which of them is likely to be least injurious to England!* And, there can be no doubt, in the mind of any man that reflects, that England ought to wish for the success of *the Turk*. Let no one attempt to persuade us that *religion* has any thing to do with the matter. If it had, the Turk's religion has nothing in it more essentially hostile to ours, than has the religion of the Autocrat. Our Church *protests* against the religion of the Autocrat, and calls it *damnable;* and though the religion of the Turk may be very bad, it certainly cannot be *worse than damnable!* Let us cast this consideration aside, therefore; let us get rid of this means of delusion; and look at the thing in its true light; namely, as a thing that may affect our immediate interests, and our permanent interests and power; bearing in mind, that no nation has ever been fool enough not to pursue these objects, though to be secured by the

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amity or assistance of those whom it calls *infidels*. The Americans are an extremely *pious* people; but when Mr. JEFFERSON (then President of the United States) found that the interest of his country required a treaty of *amity* with the *Dey of Algiers*, he had no scruple to declare, "that there was no-"thing in the Constitution of the "United States *hostile to the* "*Mahomedan religion.*" To be sure, *Republicans*, like the puritans in Hudibras, are allowed greater liberties of conscience than other people; but if Mr. JEFFERSON could go this length, and with the approbation of so pious a people, we are, surely, not to be bound to our ruin, or, at least, to our great injury by an over-scrupulousness with regard to this same matter of religion.

Leaving religion then, out of the question, we shall find, it is firmly believed by all men of common sense, that the objects of the Autocrat are these; namely, to invade a part of the Turk's dominions: to conquer and to hold those dominions; to get and keep possession of several commodious sea-ports in the eastern part of the Mediterranean; to keep up stout fleets in that part of the world; to be able to make a formidable opposition to England in that quarter; and, in conjunction with the Americans, in case of war with England, to master the English in the Mediterranean sea. This is the plain view of the matter; and, we may be well assured, that religion and the deliverance of the Greeks have no more to do with the matter, than religion and the deliverance of the French had to do with the movements of the Holy Alliance.

What Englishman cares any thing about the Turk? But, the Turk, at present, prevents the Autocrat from effecting the objects just mentioned; and, therefore, common sense tells us that England ought to be for the Turk. It is our business to preserve our power; and not to sink down into a little pitiful insignificant State. Our great Statesmen have been so busy in building barracks at home, and in fixing the number of square inches of paper to be contained in a sixpenny pamphlet, that they have not had time to bestow on thinking about the constantly growing friendship and constantly strengthening ties *between the Autocrat and the American Congress!* They are the dearest friends in the world; nothing is neglected that can tend to further their conjoint interests. There is a large and most formi-

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dable fleet growing up on the other side of the Atlantic. At present there is little point of contact between that and the force of the Autocrat; but, let him have ports in the Mediterranean; and, in case of another war, those rights, those *maritime rights*, without which England must be defeated in any war with France, Spain and Holland, or either of them; those maritime rights, pass away from England for ever, and she must cease to be what she has been for so many ages.

Thus, then, my Lord HOLLAND might be wrong, though no one will doubt of his having meant well and honestly, when he said, the other day, that he *wished the Turks to be overthrown*, and that he did nor care *how*, or by *whom*. It was honest indignation, bursting from the humane heart of his Lordship; but, we must consider what our own permanent safety demands. Here are two despots, and if they were two devils, necessity compels us to take part with that whose defence is necessary to our own permanent security.

What our Ministers intend to do, it would be hard to say. What they *ought* to do, is clear enough; and that is to send as many ships of the line as they can muster, to carry a message to the Autocrat, requesting him, in very civil language, to march his Cossacks back from the confines of the dominions of the Turk, and, in case of non-compliance, to take, burn, sink or destroy, or batter down, all that they possibly could, belonging to the Autocrat. A devil of a fuss would this make amongst the Bears of Petersburg, and amongst the *Bulls* of London. But what is a fainting fit, or fit of the gripes, to *Rothschild*, when compared with the object at stake! Sure enough, PEEL's Bill must be *instantly repealed*, or three-fourths of the National Debt swept away; but, then, we come, as first or last we must come, to the question: are these funds to be supported; is this millstone to drag England down for ever; *or is it to be shaken off*.

We find in the history of all nations, periods of rise and periods of decline; and if we examine strictly into the matter, we shall find, that these depend, not upon times and seasons; not upon any accidents; not upon any tendency in the nature of things; but upon the minds of those who govern; and, unhappily for this nation, the minds of those who have been governing for many years past

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have been, what may properly be called, minds of *shifts* and *expedients*. I shall be told, that these minds brought the country to a great pitch of *glory*, in evidence of which, the close of the last war will be cited. But, how was that thing miscalled glory obtained? Not by such measures as a great mind could have endured for a moment. It was obtained by a trickery of paper-money; by a series of shifts and expedients of the lowest, most vulgar, most mean and most scandalous description; and, when the Bank Directors were treated with contumely, at the time of passing Peel's Bill, they answered truly and pertinently, that to *them*; that to *the Bank*, was due the *success of the war!* They put in their claim to the *glory*; and to them and the Stock-Jobbers and Loan-Jobbers it was due. The result has shown of what nature that glory was. It was glory that has produced distress, ruin, misery, degradation to all that was industrious and all that was solid, and all that was held in estimation in former times. And now, at this moment, and as applicable to the case before us, what is the effect of this glory, won by a series of shifts and expedients? why, to compel this nation to stand tamely and look on while the Autocrat of Russia is marching to strike one of the greatest blows that ever was stricken at our permanent interest and power.

Those who have called themselves Statesmen in England, for the last thirty or forty years, have had but one object that they have kept steadily in view; namely, *that of preventing the people from being fairly represented in Parliament.* This has been the pivot on which all their measures, abroad as well as at home, have constantly turned. All their wars on the Continent of Europe; their prolonging of those wars; their recent war against the United States of America, in the hope of oversetting the Government of that Country; their alliances on the Continent; their aggrandisement of the Autocrat and the Austrian; their recent conduct with regard to Naples; and their flagrant and self-destructive conduct towards the South Americans. The question with them, has constantly been, not whether they were providing for the permanent power of the Country, but whether they were doing that which would check the cause of Reform in England. Their exultation, their triumph, at the close of the war on the Continent, was not over

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France; not over Napoleon, even; but it was valuable in their eyes, because they deemed it a triumph over the Reformers of England, to whose hopes they regarded it as a death blow.

It was this spirit; this miserable, this pitiful, this unnatural and spiteful spirit, by which they were animated, in a peculiar degree, in their conduct towards the *South Americans*. It was so manifestly the interest of England, to act a friendly part at least, towards those Provinces, that there is no accounting for the conduct of the English Government, upon any other ground than that of its fear to set an example that would be encouraging to the Reformers in England. To be sure, the wisest of mankind have not been selected to be our Ministers and Consuls in the United States; but one would have thought, that common newspaper reading would have told our Ministers, that a war seven years from this time will see upon the ocean fifty American ships of the line; and such ships too, as never were seen upon that ocean before; was it not worth while, to pay a little attention to this beforehand; and to think about the means of providing an enemy sufficient to cope with this force or with a part of it? There, in *Mexico* and in *Venezuela*; there were the enemies already provided. There were allies for us; and allies sufficiently dependant, too. Yet, these were left to shift for themselves; to be re-inslaved; to get their independence if they could; and at any rate, not to have England to thank for it. Not to have any obligation to her; not to be bound to her by any tie. Nay, our Ministers availed themselves, eagerly availed themselves, of the *example of the American Congress*, to do all they possibly could to prevent the establishment of that independence! Of all the acts of the English Ministry and Parliament, even during the last thirty years of unparalleled conduct, no act has been equal to this in flagrant impolicy.

Just as if that which was good for the United States, could in a case like this, possibly be good for England. The Congress knew very well, that their interest, their permanent tranquillity and security, their power and consequence amongst nations, required that the independence of South America should be prevented, and if not prevented, retarded as much as possible. The Congress, therefore, setting at defiance, not only all their pro-

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fessed love of liberty and humanity, not only all the principles on which they themselves had revolted and built their independence, not only the maxims laid down even in their own written Constitution, but, in addition to all these, every principle of public law, so long recognised amongst Nations, and against the violation of which in others they had made so many and such bitter complaints; the Congress, setting all these at open defience, and contrary to the disposition of the people of America, too, actually, though artfully, sided with the despot of Spain against his oppressed and revolted subjects. And, hear it posterity! The English Government did the same thing, *because the Congress had done it!* This was the pretence; but the true reason was, that, to have taken part with the revolted Spaniards would have been to give encouragement to the Reformers in England!

It is impossible to look at the map of the two Americas, and to know any thing at all of the population and the resources of the two, without seeing, as clearly as I see this paper before me, that it was the duty of the English Ministers, in 1817, not to lose a moment in forming an alliance, strict, and if possible indissoluble, with Mexico and Venezuela. There were two States, completely commanding the Gulf of Mexico; an everlasting watch upon those States; and absolutely holding the key of the only possible entrance and outlet of the most fertile of those States. Rivals of the United States in the products the most valuable in the latter, Cotton, Rice, Tobacco, and even Corn. Abounding in woods, fully equal in value to those of the best parts of the United States, in short, capable, in alliance with England, of completely eclipsing those States in the space of a quarter of a Century; and affording, in the meanwhile, and even immediately, complete security, against every hostile movement of the United States, and being constantly a bridle in their mouths.

Yet, no thought was taken of this. The Ministry were employed at that time in getting Dungeon and Gagging Bills passed; in dictating Sidmouth's Circulars; and in congratulating the Houses of Parliament upon the success of the measures, which, in their wisdom, they had adopted for keeping in check, not the United States of America, but the twopenny pamphlets, and Mr. Preston the cobbler and Spencean of England!

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Thus it has been, however, and thus I fear it will be to the end of the chapter; and the only comfort is, that there is every reason to believe, that the remainder of the chapter cannot now be very long.

Let no man say of me, that I talk thus of the United States *here in England;* and that I held a different language when in those States. I held the same language there that I hold here. I remonstrated with our own Government, in 1817, in print, while I was in that country; and I not only did it in print, but I sent the printed remonstrance to Washington, where the Congress was sitting, while I myself was in Long Island. And I did it expressly upon this ground, that though I owed obedience to the laws there, I still owed allegiance and duty to my own country. My language with regard to the misconduct of the Congress; to its want of feeling and want of justice towards the South Americans, was much stronger, much, less measured then than it has been now. I reprobated that conduct in the most unqualified terms; and I must do the Congress the justice to say, that there were men found in that body, men that I never knew and never had heard of before, to stand up, to quote my words, to name me, and to say, "this is very severe, to be sure, but what he says is true." And ashamed I am to add, that I have never witnessed like courage and like candour in an *English assembly!* Nor shall I ever witness it till there be an assembly in England of a very different description from any that I have ever yet seen in it.

In this conduct of the Congress, viewed in the right light; I mean in their conduct towards the South Americans, there was a very good example for our Ministers to follow; that is to say, the example of men, who at all hazards, at all events, *pursued the interests of their country.* Our gentlemen were thinking about how the cause of freedom in South America might affect the cause of reform in England! They were for making their foreign measures square with their domestic restraints upon the liberties of the people. They had their eye constantly on the *Boroughs*, and only saw South America now and then by a sort of side glance. The Congress on the contrary, left their well-established liberty at home to take care of itself, and bent all their endeavours to prevent the

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permanent interests and power of their country from receiving a blow from without. Such is the difference between little minds and great minds. Such is the difference between boroughmongering and no boroughmongering.

To return for a moment to the affair of the Turk and the Autocrat, 'Change Alley and the Boroughs will here again, I dare say, eclipse the object that ought to be in view. Some shift, some expedient; some slurring over of the thing, will, most likely, take place. And, thus, in all human probability, we shall shuffle along, till the Nation shall feel, and be ashamed of, its degraded state, and, in some convulsive moment, shall shake off the millstone and snap all the trammels asunder.

TO MR. CARLILE.

Kensington, 11 *April* 1822.

SIR,

IN your "*Republican*" of the 1st of last Month, at page 283, you seem to imagine, that my writing from America "*denouncing*" men who were advocating "*Republican government*, and "threatening how soon I would "write them down when I came "home;" you seem to imagine, that this arose from some *statement*, or *request*, sent *out to me from England*. As this suspicion may induce you to feel ill-will towards the persons suspected, I think it right to give you this solemn assurance, that I was, in what I said, in this case, not actuated by any such motive, and that I never received any such statement or request from any person whatever.

Give me leave to add, that what you call a *denunciation* was no denunciation at all. That it was merely an expression of *regret*; and that I uttered no *threat* about *writing down*. But, I must, at the same time say, that I could, at once *write you down* upon this subject; because I believe you to be a right honest man, and I am convinced, that a plain statement of indubitable facts, such as I could make, would make you *pull down* your *republican sign* with your own hands. I do not, at present, choose to make this statement. I do not think it wise to do it just now. I do not know that it may ever be necessary to do so. At any rate, I have *seen* the thing, in all its shapes, and you have not. And, as we perfectly agree as to the matter called *Boroughmongering*, which is England's real Devil, let us dispose of that first.

I cannot conclude my Letter without telling you, that it is impossible for my pen or tongue to describe a thousandth part of what I feel in reading your account of the treatment that you, Mrs. Carlile and your Sister have received and are receiving in Dorchester Goal; and I am equally unable to describe my admiration of the courage and fortitude of all the three. I dispute with no man

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about religion; I object not to the King's brother going to dine in public with the *Jews*, who are *profeised blasphemers*; and, of course, I quarrel not with your opinions, though I think them as erroneous, and not *more* than those of the Unitarians, and though I wish, for your sake, that you would leave them to work their own way, or not, as it might happen. But, with regard to your *treatment*, from first to last, and especially that of Mrs. Carlile and your Sister; with regard to that horrible treatment, as described in the Republican of the 1st of March, it is my cause and every man's cause; and, I do most solemnly assure you, that, if I did not hope, and confidently hope, *to see the day that shall give you ample justice*, I should think myself covered with infamy by living in England an hour beyond the time that would enable me to escape from her degraded shores.

The simple statement that you have given fills the heart with indignation and rage. Talk of "*distress*" after this! Talk of *suffering* farmers and their *suffering* families! Talk of *their* alarms from fire by night, and their dread of distraints by day: let them look at your paper of the 1st of March, and they will *hug* themselves in the thought of the comparative blessings they enjoy even while the stacks are blazing in their yards!

With a hearty detestation of all your persecutors, and with a sincere desire that you will live to triumph over them, I remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient and

Most humble Servant,

Wm. COBBETT.

N. B. I recommend to every man, who has any pretensions to *mercifulness*, to read Mr. Carlile's paper of the 1st of March, as far as that paper relates to the treatment of himself, his wife and sister in Dorchester gaol. I have never, since I first learned to read, read any thing so horrible as this. And, this is *in England!* The *landlords* should read this. And when they have read it, they ought to sit down quietly, and consider how this may *eventually* affect *them!* For, they never can suppose, that this is to be *forgotten*. They never can suppose *that*. However, in thus giving them my opinions and advice, in as plain language as I *dare*, I discharge my duty: I wash my hands of the consequences. One thing, however, I will here again repeat; and that is, that, as far as I may have any influence in producing, or retarding, events in England, that influence shall always have for its *first* object, the obtaining of *justice* for those who have suffered in the way that Mr. Carlile has suffered and is still suffering.

THE NEXT REGISTER

Will contain a Letter to Mr. Western on his proposed motion for the *repeal of Peel's Bill.*

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

VOL. 42.—No. 3.] LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1822. [Price 6d.

Published every Saturday Morning, at Six o'Clock.

"This Bill (Mr. Peel's) was grounded on *concurrent Reports* of both "Houses; it was passed by *unanimous votes* of both Houses; it was, at the "close of the Session, a subject of high eulogium in the Speaker's Speech to "the Regent, and in the Regent's Speech to the two Houses: now, then, I, "William Cobbett, assert, that, to carry this Bill into effect is *impossible*; and "I say, that, if this Bill be carried into full effect, I will give Castlereagh "leave to lay me on a *Gridiron* and broil me alive, while Sidmouth may stir "the coals, and Canning stand by and laugh at my groans."—*Taken from Cobbett's Register, written at North Hampstead, Long Island, on the 24th of September, 1819, and published in England in November, 1819.*

THE REGISTER.

A GREAT deal of inconvenience has, in many cases, arisen to the Readers of the Register, *in the country*, from the irregular manner of supplying it; and this has, in some degree arisen from an irregular mode of doing the business in London. It has, therefore, been resolved, beginning with the next Register, that is to say, that of the 20th of April, to make the trade-price *uniform*, and to charge all the trade, *in London*, the *usual regular trade-price*. As to *the Country*, the publisher has been surprised to find, that, in some towns, the Register is not to be had till the

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Monday or *Tuesday*, when it may always be had on the *Saturday!* At Norwich, Bristol, Portsmouth, and at every place whither a night coach, or mail, goes in one night from London regularly, the Register may be received on the *Saturday;* because it may always leave London on the *Friday night*. So that, in whatever place, the Readers may find that they do not get the Register as soon as they ought to do, they may be assured, that the fault is, not in the want of punctuality in the supply from the office; but in something belonging to the intermediate person, who takes it from the office and sends it to the country, and who has, perhaps, *other things to send*, about which he is more anxious than about the Register, which latter, therefore, he *keeps back*, in order to save the expense of two coach-parcels instead of one. To prevent this, in future, and to take away all grounds of delay, the publisher will send to the country himself, making the same allowance to the sellers in the country that he makes to those in London, and will *pay the carriage of the parcels.* The Register has, in the Country, been sold at *sixpence-halfpenny*, for the purpose of meeting the expense of *carriage* to which the country seller has been put. This will, of course, *no longer be done*, as the publisher will pay the carriage out of his own pocket. Thus will all the Trade and all Readers, whether in town or country, be put upon the same footing; and, as the alteration will necessarily tend to insure a regular and early delivery in all parts of the country, and must, of course, give satisfaction to all parties, the proprietor will incur without reluctance, the loss which he shall sustain from paying the carriage of the parcels.—All those who may choose to apply to the Office, in order to be supplied in the country, may depend on having

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their orders punctually attended to. They will, on their parts, be so good as to be early and explicit in giving their orders. If they wish to have *placards*, or to have their names mentioned in the imprint, or advertisements, as SELLERS OF MR. COBBETT'S WRITINGS, they will please to signify the same by Letter (post-paid) addressed to JOHN M. COBBETT, at The Register-Office, No. 183, Fleet Street, London.

TO

MR. WESTERN.

On the Consequences of a Repeal of Peel's Bill.

Kensington, 16 April, 1822.

SIR,

YOU have given notice, that, if no other Member undertake the task, you will move for "a *re-consideration* of Peel's Bill." By re-consideration you must mean *repeal;* and, indeed, this you state to be your object. Therefore, notwithstanding far-famed Six-Acts, I will take the liberty to address to you a few remarks upon the probable *consequences* of repealing that famous Bill. The reasons against the repeal are many and weighty; but, I must confess, there are also many and weighty reasons for the repeal, and especially that the repeal would *put off the evil hour*, which is a host of reasons all in one with those whose very minds are fashioned to a system of *shifts* and *expedients*.

I am peculiarly well qualified to judge with impartiality in this case; because I feel no bias, no interest, on the one side or on the other. In most other cases I have my *wishes;* here I have none; no wish at all. If it were left to me, I being in my present situation of a *hater of the Borough system*; if it were left to me to say, whether the bill should remain, or be repealed, I should certainly decide by toss of a halfpenny. The decision might depend on the humour in which I happened to be; whe-

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ther disposed or indisposed for *fun*. Knowing that the *end* will be the same, I might, if in a humour for *larking*, say, "come, "then, repeal the Bill, and let us "have *the feast of the Gridiron*." And, ridiculous as this is, ridiculously out of all reason as it is, this feast of the Gridiron is certainly one of the reasons, if not the sole reason, for the hitherto non-repeal of this truly terrible Bill.

The motto to the present Letter and the culinary implement placed above it; the sight, the bare sight of these, is enough to turn any one of you; *any* man of the Collective, sick; sick to the very heart. And, I leave you to guess, if you can, at the fuss, the noise, the piece of work, the bragging, the frolic and the laughing, that will take place, if you succeed in your motion! And yet (for the reasons by-and-by to be stated) I do believe, that, sooner or later, the Bill will be repealed.

That it would have been repealed last year, if I had remained in America, I am morally certain, and so are the public. I foresaw that, and, for that reason, hastened home. If I had *held my tongue* last year, the Bill would, every one thinks, have been repealed. The shame attending the repeal of the Bill; the shame at being proved to have been so grossly ignorant as to a matter of such vast importance; this shame is a *great deal;* but, what is of infinitely greater importance, the bill cannot be repealed, or modified, without the whole nation, and, indeed, the whole world, seeing, *that I possessed more understanding than Ministers and Parliament all put together!* This is the devil: this is the real obstacle: this is the terrific object. Some persons would say, that *history will record* this; but, I will not leave it to history. I will not leave the thing to a pensioned historian. I will *record it myself:* that is the safe way; and will endeavour not to leave all the fruits to be gathered by *posterity*, for whom I have as great a regard as

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other people; but with whom, by their leave, I wish that we of the present day should *share*.

That it is to the Bill and to the other measures for cash-payments that you, the landlords, owe all your distress and danger, is now no longer denied; or, at least, the denial is so very feeble, is made in so *faint* a manner, that it can no longer be considered as a denial, but merely as something put forward to save the parties from the excruciating torment of acknowledging that they were wrong; and this the whole Collective Body is the more willing to admit of, as it serves to prevent an open confession that *Cobbett was right*, which is always a *capital matter!* This denial will not be made at all much longer, for a proof of which we may appeal to the last *Agricultural Report*, where the doctrine of Ricardo is completely, though incidentally, and, as it were by mere accident, *disavowed*. The error is *now seen*. It is now plain to you all. But, how are you to look ME in the face, and now repeal this Bill? I want to know that. The nation has its eyes on the *Parliament* and on *me* too. This is one of the advantages derived from *persecution*. It is well known, not only in this kingdom, but in *America* and *France;* all well informed men know well how I stand with regard to this thing. My opinions with regard to this paper-system have been too striking in themselves, and have been stated and maintained with too much force and perseverance, not to have become well known. They have related to measures of tremendous importance, and have constantly run paralleled with and opposed to the opinions of those who adopted those measures. The measures affect *all nations* in some degree or other; and, whatever the Collective may think of it, however it may hurt the pride of the haughty, insolent, and greedy race of *Squeakers*, the name of *Cobbett* is, whenever the English paper-fabric is talked of at Paris or at Washington, much oftener

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in men's mouths than the names of *Castlereagh* and *Liverpool*. It is not in England only, I assure you, that the *Feast of the Gridiron* is looked forward to with great expectation.

One of the *consequences*, and that not the least important, of repealing the Bill, would be to *give me such a predominance in point of influence* over men's minds that no man ever before possessed, or ever thought of possessing; and this must, in the end, if I lived and continued to be as industrious as I am now, lead to other inevitable consequences hostile to the paper and borough and Six-Act system. I defy any man to prevent the existence of this influence; for, though I should not deserve it more than I deserve it *now*, seeing that my claim to superior knowledge and foresight stands clearly established by events; yet, there are multitudes of men, who are to be convinced only by a *literal* fulfilment of every part of a prediction. However, when that comes, as it will come, either by a repeal of the Bill, or by a *bursting* of the whole thing to pieces, the *influence* will come. In the latter case it will be *a little longer* before its arrival; and as this will be one of the reasons, and, I believe, the chief reason, for *not repealing the Bill*, I will here show how *the Collective and I should stand before the world*, in case the Bill were now to be repealed.

It was in the year 1810, that the propriety of passing such a Bill began to be agitated; and, I will now give a brief sketch of the conduct of the Collective Wisdom on one side, and of mine on the other side, *with regard to this measure*. The late Mr. Perry used to call the Parliament, "*The Collective Wisdom of the Nation.*" An appellation that I like exceedingly, only it is a little too long. I like it much better than *Ministry*, for that body is nothing of itself. I like it better than *Parliament*, for that may mean to leave out the Ministers. I like it better than *Government*,

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for that sometimes means one thing, and sometimes another. At Westminster there are met all the whole body that manage our affairs; and this Mr. PERRY, with great propriety, called "'The "Collective Wisdom of the Na-"tion;'" an appellation, which, having so high an authority in point of taste, I have long adopted, though, to save time and paper, I sometimes abridge it to *Collective Wisdom*, and, when hard pushed for time, to *Collective*; but, in no case, without carrying along in my mind all the respect naturally inspired by the appellation at full length.

Very well, then, we are now going to see how the Collective Wisdom and I *shall stand before the world if this Bill should be repealed*; and, in order to do that, we must see what the conduct of each of us has been since the propriety of passing such a Bill was first agitated, which was in the year 1819.

In the year just mentioned there was formed one of those detached bodies of the Collective Wisdom, called *Committees*; and this particular detachment was called the *Bullion-Committee*. The projector and chairman of this Committee was a Lawyer and Edinburgh Reviewer of the name of *Horner*, who has died since, and over whom a funeral oration, or rather orations, came forth from *both sides*, so rare were his merits as a *statesman*, and so great was the *loss* which the Collective sustained in his death. This Bullion Committee sat a long while, and, at last, brought forth a very *large book*, which they called *a Report* and *Evidence*. This Report, made in 1810, recommended, that a Law should be passed during the next Session, *to cause cash-payments to take place in* 1813. The Ministers contended, that the Nation was *able* to return to cash-payments at any time; but, that, *during war*, it would not be *wise* to do it; and, as a majority of the Collective were on the side of the Ministers (as, indeed, they usually are), it was resolved *not to pass*

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such Bill; merely, mind, on account of the inconvenience that it might occasion during war; and not on account of any injury that it could inflict on tenants, landlords, mortgagers, or debtors of any description.

So that, here were the Bullion-Committee, and its partisans for *a Law* to return to cash-payments in 1813; and the opponents of this Committee were for putting it off *till the peace*, asserting, at the same time, that the Nation *could* return to cash-payments at any time without any injury as to its internal affairs. These projectings and debatings were going on in the years 1810 and 1811, at which time the THING had me in Newgate for two years, with a thousand pounds fine and seven years recognisances for having expressed my indignation at reading of the flogging of English Local-Militiamen at the town of Ely in England, under a guard of German Bayonets. This did not make me *love* the THING much, as you may easily guess. But, the THING was then very strong and very furious. I was naturally anxious to find out whether there were any hope that the THING would, at any future time, be likely to be more tolerable to live under. This *Bullion* affair attracted my attention; and, I found, that both parties were *ignorant of the subject*, and that, if they pursued the path they appeared to be in, they would, at last, bring the thing to a state that might give even *me* a chance of *redress*. It was, however, useless for me, as to my own views, to see this ignorance of the parties, unless I made others *see that I saw it*. To do *this*, therefore, and to do it effectually, I set about it in earnest, during *the third month* of my imprisonment, and ended my task in a little better than a year. I was paying *twelve guineas a-week* for the indulgence of not being *shut up with felons!* I kept my temper; and I wrote *Paper-against-Gold*, which has been sticking to the THING, clinging to it like a leech, through all the

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boundings and startings and caperings and mad pranks that it has been playing, and which hangs on to it still, and will hang on to it till it groans out its last!

In that Work I *denied that the Nation could return to cash-payments without ruin.* I denied that the Nation could ever pay the interest of the Debt in full, *in cash.* I not only insisted, but I *proved*, that an attempt to do this would produce a *convulsive revolution.* And, there we stood *for that time*, the whole of the *Collective Wisdom* on one side, and I on the other side.

From 1814, when the *peace* came, to 1817, I was, almost weekly, calling upon the Ministers to pay in cash agreeably to their promise; but, telling them, at the same time, that they never could do it *without reducing the interest of the Debt.* In this latter year the THING grew so very angry and violent, that I was compelled to draw off to a distance from it. It still retained all its "*vigour*," which is a terrible quality in the thing. I had been out of its reach only about a year before there was a talk on foot again about *cash-payments;* and the Collective Wisdom seemed (in May 1818) to be *resolved* to pass, during the next Session of Parliament, some *law* or other to *compel* payments in cash, at some time or other. The knowledge of this resolution reached me in Long Island in July; and, on the 11th of that month, in 1818, I wrote the LETTER to TIERNEY, foretelling the consequences of passing such a Bill. I had two objects in view in the writing of this Letter: first, to show that I had more understanding than the Collective Wisdom, and to have the *proof* of this at hand when the event should arise: and, second, *to cause*, or to help to cause, *such a Bill to be passed;* being well satisfied, that my being strenuously and vehemently opposed to *any* measure, was a great stroke in favour of such measure being adopted!

What weight, if any, this latter

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consideration had, I know not; but, adopted such a measure was in 1819, and that, too, to my inexpressible joy; because I knew, that it would bring the THING completely to its bearings, and make it not only *safe*, but *pleasant*, living in England. I knew, that *my time* was at hand. The moment I saw *Peel's Bill* I was regardless of every other measure. I did not care a straw about the passing of Six-Acts, about *Edwards* and *Monument*, and, as to myself, the rest of the things that took place. I knew, that, this Bill being passed, the main chance was secured, and that we had but a short time to endure the old sort of thing. Above all things, I thought of the harvest of *fair and honest fame that I myself should have to reap.* I had waited with a great deal of patience for the coming up and the growing of the seed *that* I had sowed; I had endured all the hard seasons with a great deal of fortitude, and without any whining or grumbling; and I had a right to anticipate the harvest with feelings of delight, and especially as such harvest must be inseparable from the restoration of my country to happiness and freedom.

Now, there are persons enough who have their eyes upon this approaching harvest, and would go much more than half way to the devil, in order to prevent my reaping it. To some persons this may appear unaccountable. "What," it may be asked, "must "*Lords* and other men of rank "and in power care about it being "said that they were wrong, and "that Cobbett was right; that he "had more knowledge of such "matters than all the Collective "put together!" Oh, yes! They have need to *care* about this. They cannot shut this over. Cobbett holds a *pen*. Cobbett's memory is good; his industry great; and his perseverance not to be wearied. They will not get out of this scrape so easily. In short, they know well, that, if they repeal this Bill, he will never cease till he

has exposed their ignorance and showed his superiority over them, in such a way, and through such channels, that there will hardly be a single soul, even amongst the least informed classes, that will remain ignorant of any part of the matter.

The Parliamentary *Debate-publishing* is a great instrument in favour of the Collective. It gives them an importance that they would not otherwise have. It has long been a most powerful mode of using the press, and, in many cases, to a most pernicious purpose. But, in the present case, this debate-publishing has been singularly useful. It has given us upon record the words of all the wise men, at the time of passing Peel's Bill. Some of these I must notice now, in order to give the Collective a foretaste of that which is to come by-and-by. To put down all the praises that were bestowed upon this measure; to make a regular arrangement of all the wise sayings would fill a volume; yet, I shall certainly attempt this, and do it, too, before the thing be over. At present, let me observe that Lord Grenville bestowed on it the highest eulogiums that it seemed possible for him to discover; called it the salvation of the country; said that the Bill which suspended cash-payments was the most disastrous measure that ever was adopted in the country; declared that so injurious was it that he had no hesitation to say that rather than suffer another such a measure to be enacted, he would run the risk of even the conquest of the country by an enemy. He concluded his speech by expressing his regret that cash-payments were not to be *sooner* resumed; but he said that the measure would be productive of *incalculable advantages*, and "he "most *heartily* declared that he "gave it his *entire, unlimited*, and "most *unqualified approbation*." This was pretty well, but even this was nothing to what his speech contained in some parts. He boasted of the great know-

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ledge of the men who had recommended this measure. It was a plan, he said, "recommended by "men of science, by men who "had made these matters the ob- "ject of *great study* and *deep re-* "*search*. If that object proceeded "from them, he for one should "receive it with all the deference "which it gratified him on every "occasion to pay to talent and to "learning. His own experience "enabled him to say, that *greater* "*lights* on this important subject "had not been derived from those "who had practised, than from "those who had written upon it. "It was a plan of one now exist- "ing in Europe, whose *name*, of "all others, would be *most likely* "*to recommend any question of* "*political economy*. It was re- "commended by men who, to "*profound* and intimate acquaint- "ance with the theory of the sub- "ject, united the most *extensive* "*practical experience*. Men, in- "deed, without science, expe- "rience or information in the "details of this extensive matter, "and only such, considered and "treated this plan as *whimsical* "and *impracticable*. But let it "be remembered who those were "who supported it, men of *unex-* "*ceptionable* CHARACTER for *know-* "*ledge, practice* and *sagacity*."

Well said! Auditor! This plan; this famous thing springing from "*men of science;*" this plan, the result of "great study" and "deep research;" this measure, the "fruit of great "lights, profound and intimate "acquaintance with the subject;" this plan, the fruit of knowledge, practice and sagacity; this famous plan, was that very Peel's Bill, which you now are about to propose to be repealed!

Lord Liverpool went on in much about the same strain. Less lofty in his language, to be sure; but full of his praises of the scheme, and his exultation generally, upon this occasion was perfectly childish. In the House of Commons both sides agreed as to this great measure; though I must do Mr. Marryatt the justice to say,

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that he did object to the measure as one which would produce ruinous effects, though when it came to *voting* he did not disturb that sweet harmony which at last produced this blessed Bill. As to Mr. PEEL himself, the praises of the Bill were natural from him. Sir JOHN SEBRIGHT said, "if ever there was a moment of "Mr. PEEL's life, in which he was "most unquestionably and most "eminently entitled to the *gra-* "*titude of his country* it was the "present moment." Mr. PASCOE GRENFELL, "speaking as a practical man of business," praised the Bill. Mr. PEEL himself, spoke of the Bill as a thing which conducted us in "*safety* and *triumph* "to the destined shore of suc- "cess. He confessed that he had "changed his opinions upon the "subject of paper-money; and "that he hoped that the avowal "of the change, would not expose "him to the charge of *incon-* "*sistency*; but would be regarded "as a proof of his *sincerity*." Ah! happy Mr. Peel! Your changes of opinion are to be proofs of your sincerity, though relating to matters of theory; but my changes of opinion, are to be regarded as proofs of my insincerity, though relating to the characters of men, whom I regarded as honest till I found them to be knaves!

But, to proceed with our Members of the Collective, Mr. Tierney was very neat indeed upon the occasion. "He could assure the "Right Honourable Gentleman "Mr. Peel, that, if a compliment "from so humble an individual as "himself could give him any "gratification, he would gladly "offer it; but, in truth, he was "afraid to do so, lest he should be "thought to *compliment himself*, "the Bill being founded upon "principles which *he had been* "*advocating for a long series of* "*years*." This Gentleman was quite affecting in one part of his speech. "He returned Mr. "Peel his *sincere thanks* for this "great service to his country, and "above all, he returned him his

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"thanks for the just compliment "which he had paid to the me- "mory of a *dear lamented friend*, "and he should have received "still higher gratification from "the events of the present even- "ing, had that *beloved friend* "(Mr. Horner) been alive to wit- "ness the glorious establishment "of those principles, which he "had been the first to propose "to the attention of Parliament. "The eloquence and ingenuity "with which his dear departed "friend had explained and de- "fended his principles had al- "ways attracted the *admiration* "of the House; but to hear an "acknowledgment of their truth "was reserved for a later period!"

Was there ever humbug equal to this! What principles were these? What was it after all that this Horner proposed or said? Why, he said that the paper was depreciated, which I had *proved* seven years before, and he proposed that the Bank should be compelled to pay in specie according to law, as it had done for a hundred years before the stoppage. What the devil then, was all this *eloquence* and *ingenuity* required for? However, bear in mind, Mr. Western, that this dead Scotch lawyer Reviewer was to be immortalized because he had held the principles upon which Peel's Bill was founded; that Bill which you say has been the ruin of the country, and which, therefore, you want to have repealed.

Mr. Tierney said "that no "man was more anxious than he "was to see cash payments re- "stored; that the sooner the an- "cient standard of value was re- "stored the better; that there was "no security for the Empire but in "a recurrence to the ancient stand- "ard; that no man's property "could be safe without the resto- "ration of that wholesome stand- "ard; and, in short, that the only "objection he could have to the "Bill was that it did not cause the "cash to come quick enough!"

Mr. Ricardo said "the proposed "mode of resuming cash payments "appeared to him the *easiest thing*

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"*that could be imagined.*" He afterwards said, that "we had "nearly got home, and he hoped "the Right Hon. Gentleman "would lend them his assistance "to let them reach it in safety. "He would venture to state, that, "in a very few weeks, all alarm "would be forgotten, and at the "end of the year we should be all "*surprised* to reflect that any "alarm had ever prevailed at a "prospect of a *variation of three* "*per cent.* in the value of the cir-"culating medium." This gentleman observed that the House had withdrawn its confidence from the Bank Directors, "on account "of their *ignorance of political* "*economy*"! And then this Honourable Member sat down, "amidst *loud and general cheer-ing from all sides of the House!*"

Loud and general cheering for the father of that project which is now sought to be got rid of! Mr. FRANKLAND LEWIS said he hoped, "that henceforth the question "would be *set at rest*, and that "the general affairs of the Na-"tion would be restored, not "merely to order, but to prospe-"rity." What a remarkably pro-found gentleman! Is it any won-der that we are as we are, when this gentleman passes for a great Statesman? After Mr. FRANKLAND LEWIS, came Mr. ABERCROMBIE, the House not having been willing to listen to Mr. PETER MOORE. Mr. ABERCROMBIE said, "that the "measure was as necessary to the "political interest as to the moral "character of the country; and "though a great deal had been "said about the injury the Bank "might or might not sustain, very "little had been urged in favour "of the great mass of the people, "who had been suffering under "many difficulties and privations, "while the *Directors and proprie-*"*tors were heaping up wealth!*" This one passage is enough to mark the character of a whole assembly. This one passage, heard without shouts of laughter, is quite enough to tell us what we have to expect from that quarter. I remember reading this passage

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in Long Island and talking about it to one of my neighbours. We observed that this speaker had got the Bull by the tail in place of by the horns. He asked me who he was and what he was. I told him he was a lawyer, and the rest of what he is; and then my neighbour ceased to wonder. This gentleman was extremely anxious that the Bill should pass without a division!

An equally wise man followed him, no other than Lord Castlereagh himself. This great political philosopher, amongst innumerable other good things, said, "he would *venture to predict*, that "if the House acted upon the basis "laid down in the Report with the "*wisdom and energy belonging to* "*the British Parliament*, capital "and industry would resume their "stations, and would operate with "success, in a new and untried "direction."

In conclusion of the debate Mr. Peel observed "that we were "now at the end of twenty-two "years' departure from it, about "to reach the goal of a *sound me-* "*tallic currency*, from which we "had been so long absent, that "some apprehensions appeared "to exist that we never should re- "turn to it again; *fortunately*, "however, those apprehensions "were now no more"!

The House being about to divide upon the question on the call of Mr. Cripps, Mr. Canning "im- "plored his Honourable friend "not to divide the House." At last Mr. Cripps consented, and Mr. Canning concluded with these words, "it is the *unanimous* "determination of Parliament "that the country shall return to "the ancient standard of value in "the establishment of a metallic "currency." LOUD AND UNIVERSAL CHEERS!

Thus, Sir, I have taken a little sketch of the history of the passing of the Bill. When the session of parliament ended; the Speaker congratulated the Regent, *now King*, on the completion of this great work; and the Regent

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praised the zeal and wisdom of the parliament. But all was not yet done. The THING had driven me away; but the THING had not put my eyes out or cut off my fingers. There was my decision, therefore, to come yet. I had to write to the Regent on the subject; and, amongst other things, I told him what you will find in the motto to this paper. From that time to this, therefore, there has been a looking forward to the issue of this sort of struggle for reputation, between me and the Collective Wisdom of the Nation. There are thirteen months yet to come before the Bill can go into full effect. It is not yet cash payments, nor any thing like cash payments. The Bank paper is a legal tender all over the kingdom. The people in Scotland cannot get gold in exchange for the Bankers' notes, even by paying a discount. In no other part of the country is gold to be got except in London. And yet, such havoc has already been produced; so far have my opinions been verified as to the effect of these measures, that you are about to move for a re-*consideration of them.*

The very notice of your motion is enough for me. The making of the motion, though you were not to divide the House upon it, would bring thousands to range themselves as my disciples. What, then, would be the consequence of an actual repealing of the Bill? That modest man, Lord Castlereagh, during his invectives against the Reformers in 1817, and when he was calling upon the Collective Wisdom to pass the Bill that empowered Sidmouth to send whom he pleased to gaol, said that the people were instigated to acts of sedition "by ambitious men "who wanted to get into office "*without having any fair pretensions to office.*" The public had no doubt, that, in this species of loose and vulgar accusation, he alluded particularly *to me.* Now, Sir, I have had but a rough sort of life to lead at sometimes. I have been, during the last twenty-

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two years, some time in Newgate, some time at sea; some time in the Rules of the King's Bench; and have been, for a considerable part of the whole of the time under the fangs of lawyers of some sort or other. But I most solemnly declare, that I never have been in any situation in my life that I would have exchanged for that of a minister compelled to have incessant intercourse with boroughmongers, loan-jobbers, stock-jobbers and Jews. I never have seen that moment when I would have exchanged situations with any man calling himself one of the English ministry. If ever I were to have power, it must be wholly uncramped by stock-jobbers or seat gentlemen; and my wonder constantly has been, that any man with the bare means of living in comfort without the salary, would subject himself to the toil and torment and degradation and odium belonging to almost any of the offices that I know any thing about. The *money!* Can it be an object worth any sacrifice at all, do es any one imagine, with a man like me? And, as to the *honour!* Is there a man in England that believes, that I would give the parings of my nails to have bestowed on me any thing that can be given to Sir Benjamin Bloomfield?

What a low, what a vulgar idea was this, then! How little did this man know, and how little does he know, and, indeed, how little can he know, of the feelings and the motives belonging to talent! But, after all, suppose I had entertained the wishes that he ascribed to me, it seems now to appear, that those wishes, that those *pretensions* as he called them, would not have been so very preposterous! If I had been a Minister; if I could have submitted to an intercourse with loan-jobbers and boroughmongers; if I had been in the place of the prime Minister, you are certain, I suppose, that this destructive Bill of Peel would never have been passed. That I should no more have thought of than of jumping

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into a cell. You are certain of this. So that here would have been some good, at any rate. Nay, was there any one of the million and a half of Reformers, who, if he had been a Minister, would have projected or agreed to such a bill. Their petition showed that they had no such stupid ideas. They prayed for Reform of Parliament, for reduction of taxes, salaries, sinecures, pensions, grants, and interest of Debt; and these are the things, and the very things that you are now seeking to obtain.

I can assure Lord Castlereagh, that, though he thinks *I have no fair pretensions to office*, there are hundreds of thousands of persons and sensible persons too, in this kingdom, *who think I have*. But not one man in the kingdom can say that he ever could discover in me; and those who know me know well that it is by no means difficult to discover all that I think; no man can say that he ever discovered in me a desire to derive emolument from any thing but my earnings; and as to posts and honours, it is impossible to know me for a week without knowing that I hold them in aversion. Nevertheless, I do think, that this thing will never be *settled without my having a hand in it in some shape or other*. I am too much of a *mark* before the public for any thing very material belonging to me to escape notice. A long continuation of these labours of mine; the deep impression which my writings have had on so great a number of persons, and of the most thinking persons, too, as well as the most zealous; the great number of persons, who are, strictly speaking, my disciples, who think as I think, and who have followed me *all through* what the stupid hirelings of London call my "*tergiversations*;" these circumstances, together with the wonder (not to say admiration) excited by my astonishing industry and perseverance; these things have made it so, that the public have their eye constantly upon me, and upon

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the conductors of the system; and no small part of the public attention and anxiety is directed to this one point: "is Cobbett right or is he wrong?" This being the case, even the agitation of the question, whether Peel's Bill shall be repealed or not is matter of dreadful importance to the Ministry and the borough system. The public bear in mind all the prophecies from Long Island. Your notice of a motion tends greatly to confirm the prophecies; and if the motion were to be carried, can you conceive any bounds to the influence which I should therefrom derive; would not my word in future as to all such matters be a law with the people? Would they ever doubt of that word again? And, if I have ridden the system with long spurs thus far, what, after such an event, could reason expect to be the length of those spurs? I am a *match* for the system now; a dead *match* for it; and if Peel's Bill were to be repealed, what chance would remain for this deplorable system?

This, Sir, would be one *of the consequences* of the repeal of Peel's Bill. There are others, and of great importance, too; such, for instance, as the paper's becoming assignats; for, if this Bill were now to be repealed, in any part of it, in such a way, at any rate, as to prevent the abolition of legal tender, after the first of May 1823; if this were to be the case, do you think, that any man in his senses would regard such repeal in any other light than that of a *declaration of National Bankruptcy?* This is the light, to be sure, in which it would be regarded. No man would believe, that the Bank ever could pay again, if it stopped paying now. Every man would, for once, believe Mr. Vansittart, who said, last winter, (I mean last session of parliament) that "unless we returned to cash payments now, *we never could.*" I agree with him perfectly, unless the *interest of the Debt be reduced.*

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and I add, that we cannot return to cash payments now without a reduction of that interest.

I am totally regardless of what is called injury to the credit of the country; and, therefore, whether foreigners would take their money out of the funds or not, in consequence of a repeal of Peel's Bill, is, in my opinion, a matter of no importance. But, a *new violation of contracts* is a matter of great importance; and this would be produced from one end of the kingdom to the other. It would produce a robbery of all yearly servants; it would again unsettle all wages; it would be a robbery most flagrant of all merchants and manufacturers who have given credit, and would give to the Americans alone from ten to fifteen millions of money at the expense of the King's subjects. The immense evil; the everlasting mill-stone would then take a roll backward, crushing thousands and hundreds of thousands that have escaped it in its forward direction.

Prices would rise; "finest would be better," as the saying is; the farmer, who has survived the storm thus far would keep his capital, and the landlord would get some rent; but what would become of the labourer and the manufacturer again, and especially of the latter? The prosperity, which the Ministers now pretend to be enjoyed by the Manufacturers is merely an absence of Bankruptcy in the masters and of starvation in the workmen. This is what they are pleased to term prosperity; but even this, they enjoy only in consequence of those low prices of food which are the ruin of the farmer and the landlord. Therefore, if the repeal of Peel's Bill raise the prices of produce, and, thereby, relieve one class of men, it must inevitably spread ruin over another class of men. It is the interest of the Debt, and the expense of the establishments, which demand such enormous taxation; these are the causes of the evil; these must produce distress somewhere; they

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must lead to ruin, misery, starvation and convulsion in some quarter or other; the load may be shifted from one set of shoulders to another; but, somewhere it must rest, and there it will produce all its natural consequences.

It is a repeal of taxes, therefore, that is wanted, and not a repeal of Peel's Bill, which can only, at best, make a new distribution of the load, and stave off the convulsion for a while. In the end my prophecies must be fulfilled. There must be a repeal of the Bill or a reduction of the Debt. I wish the prophecies to be fulfilled; but I would rather it should be by a reduction of the interest of the Debt than by a repeal of the Bill; notwithstanding the latter would be more striking and would make my triumph more obvious and more simple in its cause. My choice, however, will have little to do with the matter; and, strong as the reasons are against the repeal of Peel's Bill, I am by no means certain that it will not be repealed. It would certainly give *instant* relief to the farmer and landlord; and, though it would operate to the injury of Merchants, Manufacturers, Servants and Labourers, the effect would not be so instant here as it would be on the other side.

The great objection which the Landlords have to the reduction of taxes and the interest of the Debt arises from the fears which they have of *reform* entering at the breach that would take place between the land and the funds. The *establishments* cost much; but the Landlords, by one means or another; by sons, by relations, by something or another, participate pretty largely in what goes to maintain the establishments. If my son be a placeman or a pensioner, or an officer of some sort or other, I lick myself whole for what I lose in paying to the establishments. Besides, I am always in hopes of getting, by hook or by crook, something in that quarter. All that goes to the establishments is so much to be divided, generally speaking, amongst those who have what is called interest, all of us well knowing what that interest means, and how it is to be acquired and maintained. But, amongst the fundholders interest will do nothing, especially now that *loans* are out of fashion.

It is the fundholders, therefore, whose grasp the Landlords wish to narrow; and this they cannot do without one of two things:

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a reform of the Parliament, or a repeal of Peel's Bill. To reform the Parliament is the devil! It is nonsense to think that it will be done in consequence of any motion like that which is proposed to be made; or, that it ever will take place but in a case of the last extremity. To reduce the interest of the Debt without this Reform is absolutely impossible, unless the throwing of the country into utter confusion be resolved upon at the same time. But, to repeal Peel's Bill is a thing that would create no commotion certainly; but, on the contrary, would give great satisfaction, at first, to perhaps, a large majority of the Nation. It would *make money* plenty, a thing always agreeable to persons who have dealings going on. It would cause more employment to take place; and it certainly would afford facility in the raising of the revenue. The losers would not feel the loss immediately, except the fundholders; and they are a set of persons whose clamours are of very little consequence. Besides, they would be very apt to be content. They would get the same number of pounds; and those apprehensions which they now have would disappear for a while, at any rate.

Thus would the Debt be reduced in fact, though not in name; and in addition to these considerations, there would be the relief of the Ministry from the everlasting torments that they have now to endure. If they were men of irritable nerves, they must, one would think, absolutely go mad. I would not have been in Lord CASTLEREAGH's place in that Agricultural Committee for a mountain of gold. Only think of the torment of being called upon for *high prices* by men that have passed a law to make low prices! It is a great compliment to the Ministers; not to their sensibility, I mean, but to their powers of face, that they are able to talk to such people without either laughing or swearing. The devil, they say, ought to have his due; and it is but bare justice to these Ministers to say that they were *forced*, nay bullied, and frightened into the passing of Peel's Bill; and I have always admired the address of *Canning* in getting the House to an unanimous vote upon the subject. I am not certain, by any means, that he foresaw the result; but if he did, it was as clever a stroke of policy as any of which I have a recollection. It was like the soldiers and sailors signing a round robbin. It was the cry of *one and all*. It was the old

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scheme of time out of mind of preventing the pot from be-calling the kettle in terms not fit to be used in these times of universal delicacy. It would not have done to *divide*. There would have been a motion upon record. There would have been the *names of a minority*. The Ministers clearly did not want the thing; but if they had it, they contrived it very well to get the whole into the mess.

Yet, and which really is not fair play, they have now to bear all the blame in substance, though not in form. They are called upon to relieve the distress, when they are no more answerable for it than any of the rest of the passers of this Bill. They are not told, indeed, in so many words, that the Bill ought not to have been passed, but their assailants act towards them as if this were their subject of complaint. So that, their situation is to be envied by nobody, not absolutely in a dungeon or going to trial for libel. It is impossible for them to do that which is demanded of them, unless they repeal this Bill. Reduce the interest of the Debt they dare not, without a reform of the Parliament. Reform the Parliament they cannot without the consent, and even without the first movement, of those that want the high prices. Reduce the other expenses of the State they cannot, and carry on the Government according to the present system. To repeal Peel's Bill, therefore, is the only thing that they have in their power in order to alleviate the distress of the farmers and the landlords. Dreadful, indeed, would be the shame, everlasting would be the disgrace of this; but, it would be an *expedient;* and really, all things considered, I should not wonder, if, tormented half out of their senses as they are, they were to give their consent to this, even with the condition attached of their coming to Kensington and acting, in their proper persons, in the *farce that is to be performed at the feast of the Gridiron.*

A few weeks, Sir, will inform us whether I am to have this very great pleasure or not. If you carry your point, preparations for the feast will instantly be made. It will be in the season of green geese, not less than five hundred of which will be broiled whole for the occasion. The entertainments will be such as I trust will reflect no disgrace upon our taste at this end of the Town; no house will be able to contain us; and

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upon looking into Six-Acts, which are great friends of good cheer, I see that we must meet in "*no field or place*" without *bona-fide* eating and drinking! Eat and drink we will, therefore; and, Sir, I trust that you will honour us with your presence upon the occasion, to render which agreeable at the time and memorable afterwards nothing shall be wanting that is within the power of

Sir,

Your most obedient, and most humble Servant,

WM. COBBETT.

A LESSON TO LANDLORDS.

P. S.—SIR, since I wrote the above there has come to my knowledge certain facts, which ought to serve as a lesson to all the Landlords of this kingdom. I have often had to observe, that tenants, in order to save the remnant of their property from the grasp of merciless Landlords and Parsons, would be compelled to quit their farms, and the country into the bargain. I have been saying this ever since the passing of Peel's Bill; and in my last Register but one (April 6th, p. 28,) I observed that men who quitted their farms to get rid of their leases would naturally go to America. I said, in the place here referred to, "it is not pleasant to "move a wife and family across "the Atlantic; but, it is better to "do that than to move them into "the *Poor-house*, and, in many "cases, this is the only alterna-"tive."

A case has just come to my knowledge, which is very well worth the best attention of the Landlords of England; and that there may be no doubt of the authenticity of my facts, I shall state the names of persons and places. Mr. THOMAS SMITH, a farmer of great respectability and of unblemished character, having a wife, two sons and several daughters, took a farm of Mr. HANBURY TRACEY, (a few years ago a member of Parliament,) in Gloucestershire, not far from Cheltenham. The farm was taken on a lease *four years ago*, and for the term of *fourteen years*. The quantity of land, *eight hundred acres*; the rent eighteen shillings an acre; the land very poor.

You will observe, Sir, that this was a rent of *seven hundred and twenty pounds a-year*; and you

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will also observe, that the farm was taken in what was called the prosperous year 1810; that is to say, when the flood-gates of paper-money had been opened again; and when the six millions of gold that the Bank had put out before, had been driven out of the country and carried to the French mint. So that Mr. SMITH took the farm with the full prospect of permanent high prices. Now, mark: the very next year, a law was passed; that very law which you now want repealed, which violated the contract made by Mr. SMITH; and bound him to inevitable ruin.

During the four years of the lease that have expired, I am assured, by what I deem the best authority, that Mr. SMITH *made four thousand pounds*; and that his rent was paid, not out of the produce of his farm, but out of the produce of *stock sold out of the public funds*; that is to say, out of the store, the provision, which he had made for his wife and family. Thus circumstanced; reading the Register, and believing in the truth of its prophecies, Mr. SMITH endeavoured to prevail upon his landlord to take the farm off his hands. He did not succeed; and he adopted the following measure of self-preservation:

In the *month of August last*, Mr. SMITH himself went to the United States of America, leaving his sons in possession of the farm, along with their mother and their sisters. The sons, *previous to Lady-day last*, sold off the stock and goods by auction, offering the Landlord, at the same time, to pay him his rent to Lady-day, if he would pay them for the grass seeds and the wheat sowings which they had made, and which was, of course, their property. The Landlord endeavoured to stop the sale; but this he could not do. At last, the tenant himself being gone, no hold being to be had of his person; no property of his being within the reach of the Landlord, the latter accepted of the terms proposed, paid for the grass seeds and wheat, and took payment of the rent up to Lady-day. Mr. SMITH's family accordingly prepared to quit the country and join the provident father and husband; and, doubtless, in a few weeks from this day, they will be beyond the grasp of the taxgatherer, and out of the hearing of miserable creatures crying for hunger, and in their rage, illuminating the firmament with the blaze of stacks, the result of bountiful harvests!!

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This, Sir, is a striking instance of the effects of the system we live under. There needs nothing more than these facts to characterise that system, which Mr. CANNING finds to work so well. For years and years have I been telling the insolent sons and daughters of corruption, that it is not the miserable paupers that will leave the country, but the men of skill, of industry and of capital. The more merit, the more wisdom, the more enterprise, the man possesses, the more likely is he to leave this land! What do we want more than this to give us the just character; to tell us the truth of this "envy of surrounding nations and admiration of the world!"

Let it be borne in mind, that it is not a Reformed Parliament that have brought the nation into this state; that it has not been brought into this state by Jacobins or Radicals; that it has not been bowed down thus, and thus torn to pieces, by these "wild and visionary men," who have been so often reviled, and on whom such loads of punishment have been heaped; but that it has been the work of those who have called themselves the *loyal* by way of excellence; of those who have called the people the "*basest populace*," and who have boasted that they exclusively possess the "*education of the country*."

As to the step taken by Mr. SMITH, who is there to call the *morality* of it in question? Was he to remain till he sold the clothes from the backs of his family, garment *by* garment? Talk of his *contract*, indeed, who is there that will deny that his contract had been violated on the other side? This has been acknowledged in Parliament over and over again; and if this be not acknowledged by any man, how base is that man, if he propose a *reduction of the interest of the Debt?* Such reduction is called for, even by yourself, in a pamphlet which you have lately published. What is the ground upon which you call for such reduction? Why this, that Peel's Bill has violated the contract between the public and the fundholder, and given to the latter the *double of what he ought to receive*. And, if the Bill have done this in behalf of the fundholder, *has it not done the same in behalf of the Landlord?*

This is conclusive; here is the full justification of Mr. SMITH, and of every man that has the means, the sense and the spirit to act the same part. Would you,

have had him wait till some law were passed to rectify contracts and to secure him from ruin? I myself, in a petition to both Houses of Parliament, laid my own case; the case of a mortgagor indeed, and not of a tenant; but a case perfectly analagous; I laid my case before both Houses of Parliament in the year 1820; I prayed for a rectifying of my contract; I prayed for some measure to save me from the injustice inflicted by Peel's Bill; the water in the purest spring was not clearer than the justice of my case, which, as I stated in my petition, was the cause of thousands upon thousands. And what was the result? Owing to the justice of my Lord HOLLAND and Mr. COKE, my petition was *presented*, which was full as much as I expected; and the devil a word was ever said about it in either House!-

Mr. SMITH had, doubtless, witnessed this and a great many other things; quite sufficient to convince him, that there was no hope but in retreat. He acted the wise part; the part dictated by sound sense and the most sacred of duties; that of preserving from ruin and from probable starvation the wife whom he had bound himself to love and to cherish, and the children to whom he had given life. He and his family are now safe. No taxgatherer will ever again thunder at his door; never will he again see a gaol crammed with poachers, or a poor-house with miserable creatures who have toiled all their lives for the benefit of others. No one will now come to seize him by the throat if he turn his fat into candles, or his barley into malt. Upon the bare interest of what he has lost in the course of four years in England on the farm of Mr. TRACEY he would have lived like a gentleman, having horses, carriages, gardens and servants, and all things to make life easy and happy. His prudence, has doubtless, made provision for this now; and there are many besides Mr. SMITH who will find out the value of a few thousand pounds in a county where Claret can be bought for less than a shilling a bottle; and who will, notwithstanding their reluctance to quit England, prefer the life of a gentleman to that of a pauper.

In short, we have, in this case, only a specimen of what will take place, in cases like that of Mr. SMITH, in every part of the country. Some *law* may be passed to prevent these things; or, rather, to attempt to prevent them; but no law will succeed, short of a

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law to compel the present tenants by lease, to surrender, at once, to their Landlords *all their property real and personal!* Or, in other words, an act of general confiscation and alienation of the property of tenants by lease.

This a little too much to be expected; and, therefore, the Landlords must be the sufferers in the end: and what can be more just than this, seeing that they have the power of putting a stop to the evil by causing a Reform of the Parliament and a reduction of the interest of the Debt. This is the remedy. They can adopt it when they please, and if they adopt it not let them suffer.

I cannot conclude without making one more observation, applicable to your intended motion for *the repeal of Peel's Bill*. You are, doubtless, aware, that the present Ministry cannot very well remain in place if that motion be carried. The government would, after such a measure, be, one would think, too contemptible to preserve any authority except by means of absolute brute force. And, do you happen to know, Sir, any body, who has either talent, or reputation for talent, that would *venture to take the thing off their hands?* As to those who are called the *Opposition*; are they ready to replace the interest of the Debt, and to trust the Boroughs to the safe keeping of any thing short of a thundering standing army? Are they, and, indeed, are *you*, prepared for making a *Reform of the Parliament?* All these things should be duly considered before you make your motion.

STACK BURNING.

The accounts from the country, particularly from *Suffolk*, are truly distressing to hear. The mail coach is said to have passed, in one night, *seventeen fires* in this county. It is useless, in such a case to inveigh against the *crimes* thus committed. Their nature, and the punishment awarded them by the law, are well known to us all. That which ought to engage our reflection, is, the *cause* of the commission of these crimes. The hirelings of the Borough-system talk only of the *crime*; the wickedness of the *crime*; the *vengeance* to be inflicted on the offenders; and, by no means, ever one word about the *cause* of the commission of the crime.

If the Stack-Burners were to call for *parliamentary reform*, there would be, on the part of the Borough-press, not the smallest hesitation to ascribe that stack-

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burning to Radical publications. Stacks and Reform would have away in the same paragraph. But, the Stack-burners do not seem to trouble themselves with "*theories*," with "*wild and visionary* theories." The magistrates in Norfolk did, indeed, in their proclamation, talk about "*instigators*," and, in the old language of Castlereagh and Sidmouth, assert, that the *instigators* took care not to partake in *the punishment*. In OLIVER and EDWARDS the nation saw instances of this; but, in no other cases. So that, as to instigators, it would be but prudent, at last, to keep silence.

The cause, however, of these acts of violence and revenge is always carefully kept out of sight. It was easy for the Birmingham and their underlings to find a cause for every act of violence committed by the people amongst whom *Reform* was a subject of petitions; but, here, in *Suffolk*, what cause is there here? The tools of Corruption will say, that there is no cause at all. So here we have an effect without a cause; a thing never before heard of in the world. The truth is, however, these children of Corruption know that there is a cause, and more than one, and with these causes they are well acquainted; and, what is more, they know that their own acts are amongst those causes.

The main cause, doubtless, is *unsatisfied hunger*. There are several others. There is a long arrear of soreness and sourness. There are the innumerable punishments under the game-laws. There are the endless quarrels about parish-relief. There are many, many other things; but, the main immediate cause, is, *unsatisfied hunger*. Well, but will setting stacks on fire fill people's bellies? This is like the prognostications of the Old Bishop in petticoats, HANNAH MORE, in her "*village politics*," where she asks the mob, whether *destroying the flour* will make *bread plenty*. The old dame was famous for *sophistry*. Oh, no! to destroy flour will not make bread plenty; neither is that what the parties *expect*. They are not fools enough for that. Their object is to *make their own treatment better*. They do not calculate upon direct, but indirect good; and, it is perfectly beastly to reason with them, as if they believed, that they should *fill their bellies* by the burning of stacks.

These farmers either are, or they think themselves, ill-used. They seek *revenge* on those to

whom they ascribe their ill-usage, and whom they can most readily come at. To *kill* the parties they have seldom the inclination. To beat them; to take away their goods, they dare not, the detection being almost certain. To make open resistance to the powers that be, they cannot; for they find an army, either regular or irregular, at every step, while they themselves are dismounted. In rummaging their minds for the means of revenge, the *torch* at last presents itself, as the most efficient for their purpose and the least dangerous to themselves.

This is very horrible! it makes one shudder to think of it; here is a *great crime*, not only in the eye of the *law* (for that, in such a case, is little) but in the more steady and awe-inspiring eye of *natural justice*. Next to wilful murder this is the greatest of human offences. But, still I say, we do nothing by *accusing* and *confounding*, unless we convince the perpetrators, that their *revenge* itself is *unjust*. And, in order to do this, we must first *know their case*. To know their case we must *hear them*. The first step, therefore, for the government to take in a case like this, is, to obtain true information as to the *feelings* of the people in the parts where these offences are committed. To put a score or two of them *to death* will answer no end, unless the *survivors* be satisfied of the *guilt*, the moral as well as legal guilt, of the sufferers. A wise and merciful government would discover the root of the evil (and let us hope that ours may) in a short time; and, would set itself to work to eradicate it.

To bestow bad names upon the offenders only tends to augment the evil: only tends to *inflame*: and, to impute the acts to *instigators*, and, by *insinuation*, to endeavour to implicate men who oppose generally the system of sway, is detestably wicked. The cause of the evil should be inquired into; a disposition to remove it should be shown; and upon all occasions, persons in authority should refrain from reproach on the sufferers from hunger. The farmers, themselves, are daily falling down into a state nearer and nearer to that of the paupers. As they fall their feelings will change; and by-and-by the mass of discontent will be hideous indeed, unless a Reform of the Parliament come to put an end to it. Already the farmers are a wholly different race of men from what they were but two years ago. It is surprising how quickly the mind moves when it takes a new direction, how soon it becomes precisely the opposite of

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what it was before; by how sudden a turn a life-and-fortune man becomes a Radical. So that let those who have been calculating all along upon seeing the yeomanry the same stuff *to the last* prepare themselves for a most signal disappointment.

Certain it is that there are many elements at work that have not been at work before for a great many years. We are, to use the emphatical expression of our great political philosopher, in the midst of a "*general working of events*;" and it may be as well, perhaps, to leave the working to go on a little further, before we say much more of the matter. I will just add, however, an expression of my opinion once more, that with the stack burners, an ounce of conciliation is worth a pound of threats and of punishment. If I were a Magistrate in Suffolk, or if I were only a farmer there, I would stake my existence that I totally extinguished these vindictive fires in a week; and from my lips no man should ever hear a threat or a word of reproach.

THE NEXT REGISTER

Will contain an Address to the People of England on the subject of the treatment of the *Catholics*, especially of those in Ireland; on the justice and necessity of treating them in a different manner; and on the Bill, about to be proposed for restoring the Catholic Peers to the enjoyment of their right to sit in the House of Lords.

TULL'S HUSBANDRY

Is printed, and in the Bookbinder's hands. But, as the number to be bound all at once is great, the Work cannot be ready for delivery till *after* next Saturday, the 27th instant.

LETTER TO TIERNEY.

This piece of Long-Island Prophecy will be re-published (for the *fifth* time) *next Saturday*. What a *famous* man *Mr. Tierney* will become. How familiar his name will be in the mouths of posterity! To this edition will be subjoined some of the Long-Island *Gridiron Prophecies*: The whole making a *nice little Book*, published, as Six-Acts command, *price Sixpence*.—The Morning Chronicle of to-day asks: "When will the Parliament "of England cease to think, that "it can mend shoes better than "the Cobbler?" The "Collective Wisdom," the Chronicle meant; and, it is not, begging the Chronicle's pardon; it is not *the mending of shoes*, on which the Collective piques itself, and in which it has shown the minute correctness of its taste; but in *the making of Pamphlets!*

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

VOL. 42.—No. 4.] LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1822. [Price 6d.

Published every Saturday Morning, at Six o'Clock.

A SECOND LETTER TO MR. WESTERN,

On his intended Motion for a Repeal of Peel's Bill.

"However, TIME now stands, the "*Palm* in one hand, and the *Fool's* "*Cap* in the other: the Nation are "looking on, and will be speedily "called upon to make the award."

REGISTER, 5 September 1819.

Kensington, 24 April 1822.

SIR,

IT was my intention to address, this week, a Letter to the *English Protestants* on the subject of the treatment of the *Irish Catholics*; and, indeed, I was actually doing it, when, through the means of some friend, I received a copy of your *Second Address to the Landowners*, just published by Mr. Ridgway in Piccadilly. I have, therefore, changed my subject; for, though that of *Irish Tithes* (which is the real matter in dispute) is of great importance; and *must* come to issue at no distant day, it is second to your subject, which is the master of the whole. It is, in fact, that on which all measures of reform or relief of whatever kind have a complete dependence.

This new Pamphlet of your production contains an express declaration of your intention to move for a *repeal*, or, at least, a *re-consideration*, of the Bill of Peel; and, as I now find, that you have a *measure* in your eye for *settling things*, without any mention, or any apparent thought, of a *Reform of Parliament*, I shall notice a little this proposed measure of yours, first examining

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those parts of your Pamphlet, which precede the mention of it.

And here let me, at once, charge you with *plagiarism* the most gross. You think it just and right to give Locke's *name* with Locke's words. Why not *mine?* Both factions I find alike in this respect. You are, as the country people in Essex say, "all *tarred* with the *same stick!*" You seem to forget, that it is not *pride*, but *meanness*, that can induce men to be guilty of literary theft. Curious, too, that you should all be so forward to quote Old *Jenkinson*, *Hume*, *Smith*, and *Locke*. Those, who were all *placemen*, or *pensioners*, or both, you seem to think it an honour to have read, though famously blunderheaded they are in many things. However, I shall not *reason* with you: I shall inflict punishment on you: I shall *post you up*, and leave you to be laughed at. I will bring your haughty stomachs down, before I have done with you. I will make your Aristocratic insolence bend before the superior mind of the "Lower Orders." I am the only man that ever really *tackled* you. Thousands of men of greater talent than myself have felt your injustice, have hated and despised, but have, at last, become *underlings* to you. They have wanted the *toiling* disposition, the *perseverance*, and above all things, the *self-denial*, necessary to enable them to tackle you and stick to you to the end. I want none of these. I shall not, therefore, become your underling; but shall pull you well down before this thing be over. As to what any of you say *in-doors*, you are protected by an act of your own to *banish* those who shall say that which has a *tendency* to bring you into *contempt*. This protection does not follow you into the *bookseller's shop*. When you are weak enough to expose yourselves there, we are permitted to laugh at you. You have not even yet taken so much care of your literary reputations as you have of your *game*. You cannot transport us for being found, after sun-set, "lurking"

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this havoc? However, let us, before we go further, hear you as to this cause.

"*The causes of this phenome-*
"*non appear to me daily more*
"*distinct and evident; so indeed*
"*they do to every body who de-*
"*votes any serious unbiassed at-*
"*tention to the subject.* IT IN-
"DISPUTABLY HAS ARISEN ALTO-
"GETHER FROM THE OPERATION
"OF THE ACT OF 1819; BY WHICH
"OUR ENORMOUS BURTHENS ARE
"LEVIED, AND ALL PECUNIARY EN-
"GAGEMENTS CHARGED IN THE
"OLD STANDARD OF VALUE PRIOR
"TO 1797, INSTEAD OF THAT IN
"WHICH THEY WERE IMPOSED AND
"CONTRACTED. It is clear, by
"what is passing under our eyes,
"that such a change must be at-
"tended with fatal consequences;
"that the industry of the country
"cannot sustain it; that the re-
"lative situations of individuals
"and classes will be entirely alter-
"ed, and that the progress of that
"alteration will create a con-
"vulsion that will be dangerous
"to all." Well, then, Peel's Bill, according to you, is the cause of the mischief. This is true, if you include the *previously adopted measures for a return to cash-payments*. For want of your doing this, you expose yourself to the shots of the Oracles and Edinburgh Reviewers, and even that old Ass, the Times Newspaper has his kick at you, and pretty fairly too. For he says, there was Agricultural distress in 1814, 1815, 1816 and 1817. Peel's Bill was not passed, then; and, *therefore*, Peel's Bill cannot have been the only cause of the distress now. This is a fair enough hit on the part of this old Jack-Ass, who only copies, indeed, word for word, from the Oracle's article in the Chronicle; but, no matter for that, he hits you; and it is better to parry his blows; which is done at once by including in the causes the steps taken by the Bank in 1814, 1815 and 1816.

However, did *you* ever, in the proper time and place, complain of these causes? Did you ever so much as point them out? Did

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you ever even allude to them, though in the most distant degree? Never. Yet you had a seat in parliament all the time! If, then, *you* could see none of these causes, what right have you to blame the Ministers? Are you, who have been, all the while, a member of parliament as well as any one of them, and who have had neither loan-jobbers nor boroughmongers to bother you; are you now to say to them: "I could not see these "causes, but *you* ought to have "seen them?" They ought indeed to have seen them; but, it was as much your duty as theirs to see them; and, if you felt your *incapacity* to penetrate into such causes, you should have told your constituents that you were *unfit to represent them.* I, William Cobbett, have, indeed, a right to blame the Ministers; for I saw, from the first, and pointed out, these causes of mischief, and even in 1816, *depicted the consequences* in the loss of *Sir Giles Jolterhead's estate.* But, I have a right to blame you as well as the Ministers; and blame you I must; or else I act a very partial and base part.

Nay, Sir, I contend, that you are more to blame than the Ministers. You have, though the public may seem to have forgotten it, been a *great actor in the thing*; a great mischief-doer, whatever your intentions may have been; and, I understand this fine THING a great deal too well to be humbugged by the mere name of "*Country Gentleman*," amongst those who take which title we see some of the most mean and despicable wretches in the kingdom. "Glory" has a class whom he calls "*the Gentlemen of England.*" Whether these be *the same* as "the Country Gentlemen," I know not; but, this I know, that the far greater part of all those whom I have had pointed out to me as "Country Gentlemen," are, on an average, whether in point of honour or of intellect, far beneath the average of any common soldiers or sailors that I ever saw. A set of greedy, proud, mean, and servile wretches;

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"meanness that soars, and pride "that licks the dust." They are always grubbing about after posts and pensions for their families. They are tyrants in their villages, and slaves, even the slaves of slaves, three or four deep, when they get within the air of Court.

I do not, however, class you, Sir, with this swarm of base reptiles; but, I wish to be clearly understood as bearing you not an atom of respect on account of your being what is called "a country gentleman." I come back from this digression to repeat that you have been a *great actor*, and a great *mischief-doer*, as to the matter before us; and, if I allow, as I do, that you did the mischief *without intending it*, I go quite as far on the good-natured side as any one would go, who had been pillaged without acknowledgment, as I have been by you.

When great calamities take place, a wise man will look back to the cause, and, he will inquire into the cause of that cause, if he can. Now, it is very certain, that the cash-payment measures are the immediate cause of the present revolution in property; but, it is also certain, that the *Ministers* are not to *be blamed* for the cash-payment measures. I am not to be carried away by any cry of *Whig* or *Tory*; that is all a scandalous humbug. I am sitting here, at this table, in judgment on you all. And, let poor Old Nick have his due, and Castlereagh and Jenky also: and I must say, that, from first to last, *the devil a halfpenny did they ever wish to pay in gold*, or in *metal* of any sort or size; an assertion which I am ready to maintain against any "Country Gentleman" that ever swaggered over poacher or cringed before a Secretary of the Treasury.

This is a great matter, mind, Sir. This is no trifling part of the history of this Agricultural Distress. The Ministers were the authors, neither of *Corn-Bill* nor *Cash-Bill*; and, it really is a little hard, that they should bear the

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whole of the blame? "What! "Are they good men, then, and "wise ministers, and worthy of "support?" Oh! that is *quite another thing!* But, we are not to confound in this way. Because they authorised Sidmouth's Circular of 1817 and his Letter to the Manchester sabre-fellows in 1819, it does not follow, that they would have *paid in cash!* And this is the matter which we have now before us.

Be it remembered, then, that so far from discovering any *eagerness to get into* cash-payments, they used every artifice in their power to *keep out of them*. In 1814, they ought to have paid in cash; but, the *American war* served them as a pretext for delay. When that war was over, they found out another reason for putting off the evil day. And thus they kept on from 1814 to 1819. All this while, they were *baited* by your side of the House to come to cash-payments. You will say, perhaps, that *I baited them too!* That is true enough; but, mark; I always accompanied my call for cash-payments with a call for a reduction of army, navy, salaries, sinecures, pensions, grants, *and, interest of Debt*, which *your side of the House never did*, the reasons for which are plain enough, when we consider, that there are as many pensions and sinecures on one side as on the other!

Thus, though they did not actually come to cash-payments, they endeavoured to get *prepared* for it; and to get prepared, paper must be *drawn in*. The drawing in of paper must lower prices. It did lower prices. This produced *distress*. And then came the *Corn-Bill project*. You, Sir, were at *the head* of this project. The Ministers rejected it the first year; but, the second they were *compelled* to yield. I say compelled; for they yielded avowedly against their own opinions and wishes.

Now, Sir, look into the Register of 1814 and 1815; and there you will find *me* remonstrating with *you* and Mr. *Coke*; endea-

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vouring to convince you, that your Corn-Bill *will do you no good*; praying you to think nothing about the importations of corn, but to think constantly about the *drawing in of the paper*; beseeching you to look at the Old Lady's tricks; and, in short, explaining to you all the causes of the low prices, as clearly as ever one of Mr. Brougham's Grannies explained the alphabet to a child.

The Corn-Bill was passed, however, and, as I had foretold, it did no good to the farmer. Then came 1816, when you appeared again with a *Seed-Bill*. Now, this was doing infinite *mischief*. It was laying *the foundation* of Webb Hall's crack-brain delusions. You cannot be easily excused for this, Sir. It was a perseverance, an obstinate perseverance in error; and in *mischievous* error too. On the 10th of February, in that year, before you brought forward your motion on the "*distresses of the country*," I again *remonstrated* with you on the subject, in words, which justice to myself and to my *disciples* also, calls upon me to insert here. They have for years, *had battles to fight for me*. They have endured loads of obloquy on my account. Justice to them as well as to myself, therefore, demands that I *prove*, that, if my advice had been followed, the present calamities never would have been witnessed. Justice to those also who subscribed towards the Coventry-Contest, demands that I prove, when the occasion so fully warrants it, that, if I had been in parliament, right notions would have prevailed years and years ago, and that the Bill of Peel would never have been passed, without such *accompanying measures* as would have prevented the present destructive consequences.

"As to the intended *discussion*
"on the *distressed state of the*
"*country*, it is impossible for me
"to know *what* it will produce;
"but, there can certainly be no
"benefit attending a mere *display*

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"of those distresses. They are "known and felt in every family, "which does not live upon the "taxes. It cannot, therefore, be "of any use to paint them in "speeches in Parliament. And "give me leave to say, that I "do not believe, that such dis-"cussions can lead to any prac-"tical result of any real utility, "unless there be some measure "proposed for taking off at "least 20 millions of the taxes "now paid. Mr. COKE, on the "first day of the session, com-"plained, that the farmers had "*no market* for their grain. This "was a mistake to be sure: for "they can always sell it for "*something*. They have always "a *market*; but, it is *high price* "that they want; and I defy any "human power to give them this, "without augmenting the quan-"tity of the paper-money. When "the low price was imputed to "the importations from abroad, "the remedy was easy, supposing "the importations to have been the "real cause and the only cause. "The remedy was applied, but it "was soon found to be useless, "because the far greater part of "the cause of low price did not "consist in the importations. The "cause that *now* operates is a "very different one indeed. It is "general and powerful, and must "be durable, unless removed by "new issues of paper. It is "strange that Mr. COKE should "not see this cause; and if he "does see it, that he should "content himself with merely "talking of the *evil*. If Mr. WES-"TERN does not do more than "this, he may as well do no-"thing at all; for, as to a mere "display of the distresses of the "country, it will be perfectly "useless. Great, however, are "the *expectations* from the result "of that day's proceedings. The "farmers think that *zummut* is "yet to be *done* for them, and so "do the shopkeepers. I should "not like to have excited such "expectations, unless I were re-"solved to lay all *bare*, and to "propose, in the most distinct

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"terms, a return, through thick "and thin, to the expenses of "1798, when wheat was nearly "as it is at this hour, and, per-"haps, as it ever will be again. "Mr. Western may be assured, "that *nibbling* will do no good. "It must be a *bite*, and a bite, "too, that will make the teeth "meet, and even to take out the "piece. It must be, not the snap "of a well-bred spaniel, but the "unrelenting grip of a bulldog. "This is too harsh, you will say. "Well, then, the thing may as "well remain as it is; for we are "past all help from barking and "snapping."

Now, Sir, can you read this passage, and reflect on the time and circumstances, and then look at the plagiarism in your present pamphlet, without feeling shame, and being anxious to beg my pardon? Oh, yes; that you can; and be just as full of pride and conceit as ever! The *public*, however, is sitting in judgment on us. "Time has the *Palm* in one hand, and the *Fool's Cap* in the other;" and the award is now just about to be made. Get Peel's Bill repealed, and the *decision* is instantly made!

In spite of my remonstrances you persevered, and, early in March 1816, brought forward your *Resolutions*. Such a string of nothings never before appeared upon paper. Not a word about the *effects of the currency*. That was to be beaten into the heads of none of you; though you have *now* found out that the currency is *every thing*. I shall presently show you how clearly I proved this to you *then*; but, first of all let me repeat my question: With what justice can *you* now *blame the Ministers*, you, who saw the distress in 1814, 1815, and 1816, and who dealt largely in *remedies*, too; but, who never said *one single word* about this all-important thing, the currency? You were for laws to *raise*, or *keep* up, the *price of produce*. And, if you despised all the advice offered to you upon the subject, with what reason do you throw

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blame upon the Ministers, because they did not listen to that advice? They adopted, not their own measures, but yours. They passed all the Bills that you asked to have passed, and I beg to know, then, upon what ground you impute the fatal consequences to them?

Now, Sir, in order to show, that you had no excuse for your conduct in 1816, which was merely the forerunner of the ruinous delusions of *Webb Hall*; in order to show, that the effects of the diminution of the quantity of the currency ought to have been as clear to you in 1816 as they are in 1822. Read the following from the Register of 9th of March of the former year; and then make an apology for yourself if you can. "This military and naval establishment, "together with the interest of the "debt and the sinking fund, which "latter is full as necessary as the "interest of the debt itself; all "these require, and will require "for ever, sixty millions of pounds "a-year, at the very least. To "pay this sixty millions of pounds "a-year, while an immense navy "commanded all the advantages "of all the trade in the world; "and while this Island appeared "to be the only safe place in "Europe for the depositing of "money and of riches of all "sorts; and especially while there "was afloat a paper currency so "abundant as to be within the "reach of every one; to pay this "sixty millions a-year during this "state of things was no great difficulty; but from the moment "that peace was made with America, followed as it immediately "was by peace with France, and "preceded as it had been the year "before by peace on the continent "of Europe; from that moment the "navy, which had before swept "the seas of all their riches, became ineffectual; foreigners, "who now saw the continent a "safe place to return to, took "their money out of the country "of the Income Tax, and returned home, leaving us to pay

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"the Income Tax ourselves. "Numerous English families "flocked to the continent, leaving "their share of the poor-rates "to be paid by those who re- "mained behind. But, the great "thing of all, was, the absolute "necessity which now arose of "diminishing the quantity of "paper money in circulation. "Unless this was done, the Bank "paper must have continued at "a discount of from thirty to "forty per cent., and the exchange "against us with foreign countries "must have been in the same "proportion. Therefore, the "quantity of paper was dimi- "nished; by what means, at what "time, and in what manner, I "have described to you before, "in the Second Number of this "present volume, in my Letter to "your Secretary of the Treasury, "where I have told you the whole "story about the operations of the "Treasury, and of the Governors "and Directors of the Bank of "England. I have frequently be- "fore shown, that this diminution "of the quantity of paper, neces- "sarily produced that confusion "in the affairs of all men in trade, "which confusion has been fol- "lowed by the distresses spoken "of before. For instance, the "Bank note, the Pound note is, "to-day, worth thirteen shillings "in silver. I borrow a pound of "my neighbour. Next week this "same pound note is worth twenty "shillings in silver. My neigh- "bour calls upon me to pay him "the pound. Consequently I pay "him a thing that is worth seven "shillings more than that which "I borrowed. Farmers who took "their lands, put it into high con- "dition and stocked it well with "cattle and implements, while "wheat was fifteen shillings a "bushel, have now, all at once, "sunk half the principal money "that they laid out. If they bor- "rowed money upon mortgage for "the sake of effecting these pur- "poses, or for the sake of pur- "chasing land, they have now, in "in fact, to pay nearly double what "they paid before, as the interest

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"of the money so borrowed. There "are thousands of men who "bought land, paying half the "purchase money down, and "leaving the other half as mort-"gage upon the land. The half "which they paid down, they "have *lost*, the land being at this "time, worth no more than what "it is mortgaged for. All the "tradesmen and manufacturers, "and merchants, who have been "trading upon borrowed money, "must be very lucky indeed if "they escape ruin. Seeing "that they *have to pay* in a cur-"rency of higher real value than "the currency was in which "they *borrowed*. Accompanying "this has come an abatement in "prices, which, of course, ren-"ders it impossible for the people "to continue to pay sixty millions "of taxes in a year. You have "seen enough of the paltry reme-"dies proposed by others, who "either want the sense, or want "the courage to propose to the "country that which alone can "afford it a chance of surmount-"ing its difficulties without first "being plunged into uproar and "confusion. Men are *shy* upon "this score. They fear to give "offence. Every one has his "circle of friends. Those who "are able to write, or to speak in "public, have *generally* some in-"terest or other to restrain them. "Many are afraid of mere popu-"lar clamour. For my part, I "am restrained by none of these "considerations; and shall, there-"fore, speak out as freely as if I "were sitting by my fire-side."

And, is it *after this* that you can publish a sort of *discovery*, that the augmentation of the value of the currency is the cause of the distress? Can you, recollecting this, as you must recollect it, publish to the world an extract from *Locke*, pretending that it is from *him* that you have got your light upon the subject? Yes; that you can; and expose yourself to the contempt of every candid and just man in the kingdom rather than do justice to me.

But, again, *why blame the mi-*

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[illegible] They were not bound to understand this matter better than you. In this same Register (six years ago, mind) you were told, that, after ruin had "done its "worst for the *farmers*, the *states* "*of the landlords would be trans-* "*formed.*" Six years ago you were told this, and, indeed, had been told it several years before even that. What apology was there, then, for you at that time; or, what apology is there for you at this time in not quoting my words with my name instead of pretending that you have been enlightened by *Locke*, whose doctrine is general, and does not directly point at our case? How *industrious a reader* you have been! How *deep* in your researches! What a pity, since *Locke* has enlightened you, that you did not read Locke *before* you were so eager for Corn-Bills!

However, leaving now these former periods, what a pity you did not read *Locke* before Peel's Bill was passed! You ascribe *all* the mischief to this Bill. That is manifestly wrong, because the mischief began as soon as the Bank began to draw in the paper, which was in [illegible], five years before Peel's Bill was passed. But, at any rate, if Peel's Bill be so mischievous a measure, why did you not *oppose* Peel's Bill? And, if you did not see any reason for *opposing* it, is it *just* in you now to blame the Ministers for the mischief it has done, and is doing? Have you, a Member for a county, and about thirty years a Member of the House of Wisdom, any right to assume, that you are to be exempted from all share of the blame due to a measure, which, at the very least, you suffered to pass without a single breath of opposition? Without even a suggestion as to any fatal, or even disagreeable, consequence?

Here, too, you as well as all the other opponents of the Ministers were not without advice, very *impressively given*, long beforehand too, and accompanied with *reasons* most elaborately stated. In November 1817, I (being then

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in Long Island) wrote a petition to the House of Commons, stating the *causes of the distress*, and praying for the *suitable remedy*; namely, *a reduction of interest of Debt*, of *salaries*, *pensions*, *sinecures*, and *public pay* of all sorts. This was the *two long* petition, which Lord Folkestone did not present; which I wished to have on the *Journals of the House*, that it might afterwards be quoted to my honour; and which I will not suppose that Lord Folkestone refused to present from any mean or bad motive. In July 1818, I sent you over the *Letter to Tierney*; and, when *Peel's Bill had been passed*, I sent you over a Letter to the Regent, from which I have taken the motto to this present Letter to you.

These *three papers* will live, and long live, in proof of my superiority over you all: they will live to your shame and to my honour. Here was the *warning* of the danger: here was the *remedy*: here is the *prophecy* as to the consequences of *despising* the warning, or *rejecting* the remedy. These three papers I have just republished in one pamphlet, *price sixpence!* Six-fists have not been able to effect their object; but, God knows my mind and heart, and I have taken, and always shall take, *the will for the deed*; and shall always feel and act accordingly. I remember what was said by *Mackintosh*, *Sparkes* and *Brougham*, during the discussions on those acts, and I am not fool enough not to have perceived the influence that set their tongues in motion. I remember that the man was put in gaol for ten weeks, who went round an English town to announce that *I had arrived in good health*. The immediate actors in these scenes never attracted much of my attention. I looked back, and looked back, to the first movers; and I thank God for what *I now behold*, and for what I shall and must behold.

So much for the *past*. But, you have a *remedy*; and, now let us look at that. First, however, as I have said so much about your

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being enlightened, all of a sudden, by *Locke*, let us see what it is that *Locke* says; and, it will be curious enough, if we should find, that the passage quoted is not only *inapplicable* to our case, but *false* in *its doctrine*, into the bargain. The words are these: "The exi- "gencies and uses of money *not* "*lessening* with *its* quantity, and "it being in the same proportion "to be employed and distributed "still, in all the parts of its cir- "culation; so much as its *quan-* "*tity* is *lessened*, so much must "the share of every one that has "a right to this money, *be the* "LESS; whether he be landholder "for his goods, or labourer for "his hire, or merchant for his "brokerage.—If *one-third* of the "money employed in trade, were "locked up, or gone out of Eng- "land, must not the landholders "necessarily receive *one-third* "less for their goods, and con- "sequently rents fall? a *less* "quantity of *money* by *one*-third "being to be distributed amongst "an *equal* number of receivers? "Indeed people not perceiving "the money to be gone, are apt "to be jealous one of another; "and each suspecting another's "inequality of gain, to rob him "of his share; every one will "be employing his skill and "power, the best he can, to re- "trieve it again, and to bring "money into his pocket, in the "*same* plenty as *formerly*. *But* "*this is but scrambling amongst* "*ourselves*, and helps no more "against our wants, *than the* "*pulling of a short coverlet* will, "amongst children that lie toge- "ther preserve them all from the "cold; *some will starve, unless* "*the father of the family pro-* "*vides better, and enlarges the* "*scanty covering*. This pulling "and contest is usually between "the landed man and the mer- "chant, for the labourer's share, "being seldom more than a bare "subsistence, never allows that "body of men, time or oppor- "tunity to raise their thoughts "above that, or struggle with the "richer for theirs, (as one com-

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" non interest;) *unless when some* " *common and great distress,* " *uniting them in one universal* " *ferment, makes them forget* " *respect, and emboldens them to* " *carve to their wants with armed* " *force, and then sometimes they* " *break in upon the rich, and* " *sweep all like a deluge.*"

This passage, which you call "*almost miraculous,*" is, in fact, a very *poor, common-place* thing, and the figure, in the middle of it, perfectly absurd. The notion, that *prices will fall one-third* by the removal out of the country of *one-third of the money*, is false. *Locke* had not had, like you, the advantage of getting the *Letter to Tierney for two-pence*, and, therefore, he might be excused. In that Letter it is shown, that the taking away of a third of the money, will *make prices fall much more than a third.* It is a false notion, too, that there will be any "*scrambling*" on account of a diminution of the quantity of money in a country. It is false to suppose, that a small quantity is not as good as a large quantity, as is here supposed; except as applied to cases of *Debts* and *Contracts* and *Taxes* and *Pay out of Public Money*, the rate of which is *already fixed*; and to these *Locke* makes no allusion. What are the labourers to be in a *ferment* for on account of the *quantity of money* in the country; unless there be certain fixed taxes or payments out of the public stock to produce oppression? So that this "*almost miraculous*" passage, which, in the first place, has not the most distant application to our case, is, in itself, if not a tissue of errors, at least a very bald and inadequate explanation of the thing intended to be explained.

We now come to your *remedy*, which is described in these words: " I have pledged myself to bring " before the House, in some form " or other, a *consideration of the* " *effects of that Act*, and perhaps " shall move a repeal of it, with " the view subsequently and *gra-* " *dually to adjust the standard of* " *value in proportion to the rate*

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"*of prices, and the value of* "*money since the year* 1797; *and* "*according to which, public and* "*private debts, taxes, monied en-* "*gagements and contracts have* "*been made and imposed; and* "*for the purpose of regulating* "*the same according to the me-* "*dium price of corn and other* "*essential articles, as well as la-* "*bour during that period.* I am "perfectly aware of the extreme "delicacy and difficulty of such "adjustment: it will require time "and most mature deliberation. "The Act of 1797 has thrown us "into a situation, from which, to "extricate ourselves, *must* be a "work of infinite difficulty; no "path presents itself which is not "strewed with thorns; but *that* "we have chosen, leads to *inevi-* "*table destruction*, and we must "reconsider and retrace our "steps."

In so important a matter, you ought to have been very precise and clear in your *definition*. I do not know what you mean by "adjusting the *standard of* "*value* in *proportion* to the rate "*of prices and the value of money* "*since the year* 1797." However, what I suppose you to mean is this: *To reduce the intrinsic value of the coin, so as to make a bushel of wheat sell for as much nominally as it did between 1797 and* 1914. There is nothing new here. It is Mr. James' ("Lord Little-Shilling's") project. It is what Mr. Thomas Attwood has contended for with as much ability as can be employed upon such a subject.

To make the reduction sufficient, the *gold Sovereign* must pass for *three pounds*, which would be a pretty decent pull upon *creditors* and *receivers*. It would be perfectly just as far as relates to all payments out of the *public money*. But, would it be just towards *yearly servants*, the whole of whom would be actually defrauded of two-thirds of a part, at least, of their year's wages? Then, pray consider *private creditors*, amongst whom are *all*

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tradesmen, the whole of whom, such as butchers, bakers, upholsterers, and all common tradesmen who have yearly, or long, bills on their customers, *must be ruined*. Wholesale tradesmen, the whole of whose capital is frequently in book debts, must also be ruined. Merchants and Manufacturers, having debts due them abroad must also be ruined. Annuitants or contracts of recent date; owners of house and land recently let; recent mortgagees; all these would be grievously injured. The *labourers* would also be injured greatly; for it would *take time* to get their wages up again.

Have you looked well at the *agitation*, which the very *mention* of a design to *clip the skilling*, or to *reduce its size*, would create? Do you imagine that *any paper* would pass after such a measure? Have you an idea of the confusion and uproar that an attempt of the kind would create? Have you thought of the manner in which the *soldiers* would relish such a measure; or, would you make an exception in their favour?

You say very fairly, "that no "path presents itself which is not "strewed with thorns;" but, I can assure you, that this is *the most thorny of all*. There is a great deal better way than this of getting out of the difficulty; and one that I believe from my soul the Ministers would have come to before now, if they had been let alone; if those bothering metaphysicians from the North had not pestered them with their "bullion-question." Paper-money is only Paper-money, call it what you will. Repeal Peel's Bill; issue liberally; the more your speed the better; make a "Bank *Restriction*" as before; but, make *no legal tender* except *at the Bank;* and, the whole thing will be settled to universal satisfaction in about four months! This would, indeed, put an end to the Borough-system; but, if you see any harm in that, I must confess that I do not.

This is, I am confident, the

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only way of saving any of the estates, unless by *reduction of interest of Debt* together with concomitant measures, by a *reformed parliament;* and, if I were to say, that I expect to see such reform, but in the last extremity, I should be a great deceiver. The *plan* for this adjustment, which I drew up in Long Island, and which would long ago have been before the country, if I had been returned for Coventry, is, I am pretty sure, the plan that will be adopted at last; that is to say, if any settlement at all be to take place without a convulsion. But, *time passes.* Every month renders a *just* and *quiet* settlement more difficult; and I do not wish to disguise, that I begin to think *that it will not take place.* There is great ground of confidence in the general information, in the good sense, in the justice, the moderation and humanity of the people. But, who is to answer for what a sudden burst may produce?

What you may mean, Sir, by our present path "leading to *inevitable destruction,*" I do not know. Destruction of *what?* All that I can see a *destruction* of is, the property which the *present owners* have in land. This will assuredly take place, if the present thing go on in its present way; and this is not clear *now;* but has been clear for years, and many years too. How this comes not to have been seen, when Peel's Bill was passed is strange enough; or, at least, it would be, if we were speakiag of any *other assembly* on the face of the earth. It was *so evident* that that Bill must be ruinous to the land, in the end. You are a *deep* reader, Sir. You love *deep* things. Besides, it is *deepness* to name *Locke.* That is such a deep sound. Mr. *Waithman's* portrait, in a shop, on Ludgate Hill, represents him as having in his hand, "*Locke* on the *human understanding.*" That is *so deep!* But, Sir, if I could but inveigle you to read the last of the *two-penny trashes* abovementioned. The Letter to the Regent on the "*wild* and *vi-*

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"*sionary* projects of the Borough-"mongers!" If I could but prevail on you to do this, and that, too, before you make your motion, how happy should I be! It will teach you more useful matter than Locke ever taught any body, and will give you two pennyworth of laughter into the bargain. I have not seen that Number of the Register, that I know of, since I wrote it, till this very day, when I sent it to the press. The moment I clapped my eyes on it I fell a laughing. An association of ideas brought me back to the paper-tent where I wrote it, and to all the fun that I enjoyed at the time. But, when I come now to read it over soberly, I am surprized at the correctness of all the views there taken of the subject. It was then *prophesy*: it is a record of *facts*. All is verified to the letter. There was the Speaker (the Number related to the close of the Session of 1819) *congratulating* the Regent, that he had a House of Commons *wise enough* to pass Peel's Bill! There was the Regent expressing, in the name and behalf of His Royal Father, *his satisfaction* that he had a House of Commons *so wise* as to discover the *safe* and *easy* means of returning to the ancient standard of value! And there was I, sitting in my shirt and trowsers, writing a *prophesy* upon the consequences of this measure of consummate wisdom! I am sure I never *read* what I wrote before it came off to England, and I do not recollect ever having seen it, in England, till this very morning. There were several Numbers, written in Long Island, after I got the news of the passing of Peel's Bill. I wished to republish *one* of them just now. I had frequently thought of the one that began with a commentary on the Speaker's *congratulatory speech*; and, this morning I looked it out. I say all this in order to tempt you to read it, Sir, before you make your motion.

Before I conclude this very long Letter, let me notice the

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doctrine, which the *Oracle*, in conjunction with *Malthus* they say, has cooked up for the *comfort of the Landlords*. I have not, perhaps, a very clear conception of it, and I have not yet seen the pamphlet, or review, that contains it; but, from what I can gather, it is this: that, *if all foreign produce be kept out of the country, the land must yield the means of paying rent*. This is, in fact, the doctrine of the Treasury Pamphlet, published in January, and ascribed to Mr. Courtenay. I took the part of Mr. Courtenay's pamphlet in my rustic harangue at Chichester, to which I beg leave to refer you. But, as this really seems to be the *last hope* of the Boroughmongers, I will here make a few observations on it.

The argument is this: "An "article of such indispensible ne- "cessity as human food must "continue to be raised: no ar- "ticle will continue to be raised, "or made, for any length of "time, unless it fetch a price "sufficient to pay *the cost* of "production: human food does "not *now* fetch a price sufficient "to pay the cost of production "*including rent*; therefore, the "price of human food *must rise*, "and must, in general, yield "*enough to pay rent*, unless food "be permitted to come from "abroad."

I do not know, that this is *precisely* what they say; but, it is this in substance. Now, Sir, all the premises may be true; but, the conclusion is, I am convinced, false. To be sure human food will be raised, because, do what you will, hunger will, in case of necessity, take possession of the land. It is also true, that it will not be raised, for any length of time, without yielding enough of something or another to pay *the cost* of production; for, if, in some cases, it yields nothing beyond the food of him who tills the land, his labour is the cost and the *only* cost in certain cases. So far all is right. But, as to *rent* being part of the cost, that

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may or may not be. This argument assumes, that rent is necessary to production; it assumes that human food cannot come without rent; it may as well assume that human food cannot come without tithes.

When we set about to raise wheat, for instance, we want the seed and the various kinds of labour from the seed-time to the winnowing. These are *necessary*. Without these the wheat *cannot come*. But, it will come without *rent*. Rent is what *is left* after the *producing costs are paid*. If there be nothing left, after those costs are paid, there is no rent; but this circumstance will not tend at all to put a stop to production.

But, the *price* will be, and must be, they say, sufficient to pay rent; for men *will have* rent for their land. If it be a *will have*, indeed; then they *may have* what rent they *choose*, and the prices *must rise accordingly*. Oh, no! The positive price of the produce does not depend solely on the cost of raising it nor upon the quantity raised in proportion to the usual demand. It depends, too, as all other prices do, on the *quantity of money circulating in the country*. And, if to labour and seed, there be added another cost, called *tax*, which, no more than rent, is *necessary to production*, this tax may take away that which would otherwise be rent.

Suppose the farms of a country to be all of one size and quality; and suppose each to yield a rent of a hundred pounds a-year, leaving the farmer a bare existence, and nothing more. Then suppose the government to lay on a tax of a hundred a-year on each farm, payable by the farmer prior to rent. Must he not *cease to pay rent*? Could he *raise his price*? How could he raise his price, unless he could put more money into circulation in the country? Divest the thing of money altogether. Suppose him to have every year 100 bushels of corn to give to the landlord. If the government came and took that,

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could he create another hundred bushels to give to the landlord?

But, landlords may choose, it is said, whether they will let their farms without getting rent. Yes, but they may *not choose* as to paying *land-tax*, and *poor-rates* too if they keep the farms in hand; and, if the farmer can pay them no rent, how are they to make it? They may let the land *lie fallow*. Yes, but they must, then, keep the labourers from some *other source;* and what source, I wonder can that be? The fact is, that when we come, thus, to analyse the thing, we find, that, though we talk of *Landowner*, and though he talks of *his property*, he is, after all, only *part proprietor;* and that, in short, neither parchments nor prescription, can take from the whole of the people of a country the *right to live upon the produce of the land.*

The question of *rent* or *no rent*, lies, properly speaking, in our present case, not between the *landlord and tenant*, but between the *landlord and the government.* The government takes away as much as it likes. It takes, we will suppose, as much as it *can.* It *must* leave those who till the land sufficient to eat and to screen their carcases from the inclemency of the weather, or they could not work, and would rebel. It *must* leave enough in the hands of the farmer to keep up his stock or he could not carry on production. But, there is *no must* in the case of *rent.* Production may go on very well *without that.* If the government *need* that, whether to keep down radicals or re-exalt the Bourbons, it can take it, without any hinderance to production; and, so "loyal" a body of men as the landlords of England, would hardly wish to keep what was needed for such purposes!

It appears to me, then, Sir, that this last hope of the Boroughmongers completely fails them; and, that the idea of some *overruling necessity* to bring them rents is as gross an absurdity as ever found its way into the head of Oracle. The general positive,

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price of the produce will depend upon the quantity of money in circulation. The quantity, or amount of the tax, will, or will not, take all away, except the *necessary producing costs*. If the tax leave nothing but the necessary producing costs there can be no rent; if it leave any thing more, that more will go to the landlord. In the necessary producing costs is included the *interest of the farmer's stock*; for, unless he have this he will *withdraw his capital from the land*. The landlord, you observe, cannot *withdraw*. His share comes, if at all, *out of* the earth itself and is inseparable from it. The parson will have his portion; for he comes and takes it away *out of the field*. The burden goes rolling back, till, at last, it settles on the shoulders of the landlord. It may happen, that the government, after leaving what it *must leave* with the husbandman and labourer, without leaving any thing for rent, will still *not have enough*. In that case, it must take the *parson's share!* Nor should I be at all surprized to see this beginning in a short time. Perhaps the first step in this way may be to make the parson *divide* with the landlord! Give them the tithe between them, while the fundholder and soldier and placeman and pensioner take the rents!

However, the thing will assume so many and such strange shapes before it come to the close, that it would be presumptuous in any one but *an Oracle* to attempt to foretel particulars; and, therefore, Sir, I now take my leave of the subject for the present, by wishing you a *full house* and plenty of actors on both sides.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient

And most humble servant,

WM. COBBETT.

POSTSCRIPT.

SIR,—How *curiously* this thing does work. I had hardly closed the above letter to you, when the post brought me the intelligence, which you will find below! I have long been saying, that the *tithes must go*, in some way or other. It was not to be believed, that the

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landlords would *lose all*, and let the parsons *keep all*. However, here is the thing. I have no time now for further comment.—Just let me add: Remember *Manchester* and *Parson Hay* and the *Living of Rochedale!*

"CHURCH IN DANGER!!!"

THIS cry, which, like that of "*Wolf! Wolf!*" in the fable, has often, and, indeed, always hitherto, been a *false* cry, a *sham* cry, seems at last, likely to become, like that of the shepherd's boy, but too true a cry, as the reader will, it is believed, clearly perceive, when he has looked well into the following account of a decision at the late *Quarter Sessions at Norwich*, on an appeal against the poor-rate by a *Reverend owner of Tithes*. A more *important* decision has seldom been made, and certainly never one *more just*. What! Can it be deemed *legal*, would any thing be worthy of the name of *law*, would the thing enforcing it be worthy of the name of government, if it left the tithe-owner to enjoy a clear surplus, while it left not a farthing *of profit to the farmer* and not a farthing *of rent to the landlord?* Oh, no! Such glaring injustice cannot be suffered to exist, in any part of the country long. These are the times to *try* what institutions are *made of*. It is clearly *profits* on which the assessment ought to be made; and, as the tithe is *all profit*, except the cartage and housing and threshing, surely it ought to be drawn upon till it be almost all taken away, if the farmer make no profit and can pay no rent unless the tithe be thus drawn upon. It is, however, wholly unnecessary to detain the reader by further preface on a case so obviously important, and so very well calculated to give our spiritual guides something to occupy their minds other than the duties of magistrates and the guardianship of *game-covers* and of *gaols*. The Reverend persons, who are at the head of the "Society for propagating *Christian Knowledge*" will now have something to think about other than the publishing of calumnious and base insinuations against "*Cobbett*" by name, and in language little more decent than that employed by the fellows of Billingsgate. These Reverend persons, who were always foremost in urging on the government *to war*, and who have not, as yet, borne any part of the burthen created by the war, will

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now find what the effects of war really are; and, the good of it is, too, that it is with the *landlords*, and not with the *Jacobins*, that they have now to contend! The only thing that can, generally speaking, preserve any of the rent even another year is the taking of the tithes to keep the poor with. So that it is no matter to the *mass of the people*. Rent must go or tithe must go, *at once*; and both by-and-by.—Now for it.

"At the last Norfolk Quarter "Sessions, held at Norwich, on "Wednesday the 17th day of "April instant, the Court came "to a most important decision on "the Poor Laws, on an Appeal "by the Reverend Dr. BULWER, "Rector of CAWSTON, against "the *Poor Rates* for that parish. "The Doctor had been rated at "550*l.* for his tithes, against "which he appealed, upon the "ground *that it exceeded a fourth* "*of the assessment upon the tithe-* "*able property in the parish*, "*which he contended was the* "*proportion at which tithes should* "*be assessed* to the Poor Rate. "The Court *dismissed the ap-* "*peal*, being *unanimously of opi-* "*nion*, that there was no rule in "law for fixing a proportional "assessment on tithes compared "with land, and that the only "principle, was to assess all real "property according to the *pro-* "*ductive value or* PROFIT which "it yielded. This determination "is important, as it recognises a "principle, the general applica- "tion of which, at the present "time, will necessarily be at- "tended with the most serious "results, both to the Farmer and "the CLERGY; upon the latter "of whom the chief burthen of "supporting the poor will now, "as in former times, be thrown. "According to this principle it is "evident, that, at present prices, "the assessment upon land ought "to be merely *nominal*, and that "TITHES should be assessed at "their *full amount*, it being noto- "rious that no *profit* whatever is "now afforded from land in ge- "neral, and that that which the "landlord receives in the *name* "*of rent*, is in fact a payment out "of the Farmer's capital, while "TITHES being taken *clear of* "*taxes and all other expenses* at- "tending the raising of the crop, "are nearly ALL *profit*. This "decision has, we understand, "excited a great sensation in "Norfolk, and the Farmers, in "many places, have already in- "sisted upon a reduction of their "assessments, and upon rating

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" the Parsons to the full amount " of their tithes, as well *where* " *they are compounded for*, as " when taken in kind. Let the " Farmers generally adopt this " plan, and they will not only " obtain *immediate* and *consider-* " *able relief*, but, in a few months, " they will see the Clergy as " clamorous for Reform, as the " most devoted Radical; for no- " thing short of Reform (any al- " teration in the law being wholly " out of the question) can now " prevent the tithes from *being* " *wholly swallowed up in Poor* " *Rates*. The above principle " was acknowledged in its full " extent a short time since in the " Court of King's Bench; Mr. " Justice Holroyd having ex- " pressly declared, that a rate on " land, is in effect a rate on the " *profits* of land, for where there " are no profits, there is no *be-* " *neficial occupation.*" —— Vide 4th Vol: Burn's Justice, p. 77. *Chetwynd's Edition.*

THE SPRING.

I MUST just put on record some facts about the Winter and Spring.—On the 30th of March I saw, near Norwich, a field that had been *horse beans* last year, and that had been ploughed up, and sowed with *wheat* in the fall; I saw in this field, beans (which had come up with the wheat) standing one in a yard, or so, all over the field, in *full bloom*, and as fine bloom as I ever saw. The beans were from 9 to 15 inches high.——6th April, bunches of the bloom of *Ten Week Stocks* for sale in Covent Garden Market, London. As fine bloom as one sees in general. The plants had stood out all the Winter at Fulham.——15th April, I saw Oak trees cut down and *barked*, in the parish of Farnham in Surrey, not far from the West End of the Hog's Back, going from Guildford to Farnham.——15th April, Ten Week Stocks (out all Winter in a bleak nursery ground near Guildford) in full bloom.—24th April. *Some* Horse-Chesnut flowers *full out* (but not generally, all over the tree) at Kensington.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

I HAVE received two letters this week, and one last week, on the subject of *Irish Tithes*, and a *horrible* subject it is! I should

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like to insert these letters here; but, the writers, when they give way to their *honest* indignation, forget the gaols and dungeons, and the magistrates (some of whom are *parsons*) who have the "*visiting*" of those gaols and dungeons! The *thing* is as they describe it; the greedy and unfeeling *actors* are what they say they are. But, I must not, *as yet*, use their plain and honest language. Their letters are, therefore, of *little use*; for, they must be so *cut* and *hacked* about, that, at last, they become, not only inelegant, but unintelligible. This mortifies me very much. When these Correspondents sit down to write on *Irish Tithes*, let me beg of them to bear in mind *who it is* that they are likely to offend; and to ask themselves, whether it be a class that has ever been known to leave unexerted any power of punishment that it happened to possess? To mention *names*, in such a case, is wholly out of the question. With a little care, and a very little, all the ends may be answered, however. *Circumlocutionize* the profligate, guttling, hard-hearted, grinding, grasping, haughty and insolent crew. *Hypothesize* their cases and their conduct. This is the way to come at them. Above all things *stick exclusively to the temporalities.* Never meddle with *spirituals.* All men are rational, when you talk about *so much an acre for tithe of corn or potatoes*; but, all men are not rational, when you talk about *images* and *holy water* and the *Pope.* It is best, therefore, in such cases, always to confine ourselves to the *Temporalities.* Mr. MILLS has a work on *Irish Tithes and Temporals*, which, I hope, the public is soon to have in their possession. It presents a *picture*, which, if it could but be once seen by every man in the kingdom, would cause the immediate, the *instant*, abolition of the *monstrous original*; the equal of which has never been seen before in any country under the sun.

This Day is Published,
By JOHN M. COBBETT, No. 183,
Fleet Street.

THE HORSE-HOEING HUSBANDRY; or, a Treatise on the Principles of Tillage and Vegetation; and also a Method of introducing a sort of Vineyard Culture into the Corn-Fields, in order to increase their Product, and diminish the common Expense. By JETHRO TULL, of *Shalborne*,

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Birds.—To which is prefixed, an Introduction, relating to the history and division of the Work, and giving an account of some recent experiments. By WILLIAM COBBETT.

In the *Proposals* for publishing this Work, it was stated, that the price to the Subscribers would not exceed *twelve shillings*. The great mass of print that the volume contains, the goodness of the print and paper, and the neat manner in which it has been completed, would make that charge not by any means too much. But, the *very liberal subscription* and the complete security against loss which that subscription has given, while they demand an expression of the pleasure that I derive from so unequivocal a compliment to my judgment, demand also, since it can be very well afforded, that I make the prices of the Work lower than was at first intended. The price, therefore, to Subscribers will be *ten shillings*, and the *selling* price, *thirteen shillings and sixpence*. — No money was taken *in advance* on the subscription. Gentlemen will now, therefore, please to send the money when they send for the books; and, in order that no one who may have intended to subscribe, shall be excluded as to the *effect*, any gentleman who may have subscribed for one copy, and who may wish to have another for a friend, shall be at liberty to take a second copy at the subscription price.

TURNIP SEED.

ALL sold long ago! I am very sorry that I have none to oblige many gentlemen with, who have made application.

LAST VOL. OF REGISTER.

IT has been our custom to close a volume at the end of about every *six months*. But, we have now changed the length of time; and have begun to close the Volumes at the end of *three months*. The last volume was closed *the week before last*. Its *Title Page*, *Contents* and *Index* were attached to the last week's Register. It is our custom to print a certain number of copies to keep, to be *sold in Volumes*. We have some copies of the last volume, and of the volume before that, complete. The *price* is according to the number of Registers that the Volume contains.

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THE REGISTER.

A GREAT deal of inconvenience has, in many cases, arisen to the Readers of the Register, *in the country*, from the irregular manner of supplying it; and this has, in some degree arisen from an irregular mode of doing the business in London. It has, therefore, been resolved, to make the trade-price *uniform*, and to charge all the trade, *in London*, the *usual regular trade-price*. As to *the Country*, the publisher has been surprised to find, that, in some towns, the Register is not to be had till the *Monday* or *Tuesday*, when it may always be had on the *Saturday!* At Norwich, Bristol, Portsmouth, and at every place whither a night coach, or mail, goes in one night from London regularly, the Register may be received on the *Saturday;* because it may always leave London on the *Friday night*. So that, in whatever place, the Readers may find that they do not get the Register as soon as they ought to do, they may be assured, that the fault is, not in the want of punctuality in the supply from the office; but in something belonging to the intermediate person, who takes it from the office and sends it to the country, and who has, perhaps, *other things to send*, about which he is more anxious than about the Register, which latter, therefore, he *keeps back*, in order to save the expense of two coach-parcels instead of one. To prevent this, in future, and to take away all grounds of delay, the publisher will send to the country himself, making the same allowance to the sellers in the country that he makes to those in London, and will *pay the carriage of the parcels*. The Register has, in the Country, been sold at *sixpence-halfpenny*, for the purpose of meeting the expense of *carriage* to which the country seller has been put. This will, of course, *no longer be done*, as the publisher will pay the carriage out of his own pocket. Thus will all the Trade and all Readers, whether in town or country, be put upon the same footing; and, as the alteration will necessarily tend to insure a regular and early delivery in all parts of the country, and must, of course, give satisfaction to all parties, the proprietor will incur without reluctance, the loss which he shall

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sustain from paying the carriage of the parcels.—All those who may choose to apply to the Office, in order to be supplied in the country, may depend on having their orders punctually attended to. They will, on their parts, be so good as to be early and explicit in giving their orders. If they wish to have *placards*, or to have their names mentioned in the imprint, or advertisements, as SELLERS OF MR. COBBETT'S WRITINGS, they will please to signify the same by Letter (post-paid) addressed to JOHN M. COBBETT, at The Register-Office, No. 183, Fleet Street, London.

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

Vol. 42.—No. 5.] LONDON, SATURDAY, May 4, 1822. [Price 6d.

Published every Saturday Morning, at Six o'Clock.

"This Bill (Mr. Peel's) was grounded on *concurrent Reports* of both "Houses; it was passed by *unanimous votes* of both Houses; it was, at the "close of the Session, a subject of high eulogium in the Speaker's Speech to "the Regent, and in the Regent's Speech to the two Houses: now, then, I, "William Cobbett, assert, that, to carry this Bill into effect is *impossible*; and "I say, that, if this Bill be carried into full effect, I will give Castlereagh "leave to lay me on a *Gridiron* and broil me alive, while Sidmouth may stir "the coals, and Canning stand by and laugh at my groans."—*Taken from Cobbett's Register, written at North Hampstead, Long Island, on the 24th of September, 1819, and published in England in November, 1819.*

TO

MR. WOTHERHOUSE.

On his censure on Mr. Cobbett.—On the starving Irish.—On Castlereagh's projects of 29th April; and, especially on the project for repealing Peel's Bill, or Legal-Tender *project.*

Kensington, 1st May 1822.

SIR,

IT has long been the practice of those in parliament to censure, by name, any one out of parliament that they may choose to censure; and, therefore, I am by no means disposed to *complain* of your conduct upon this occasion; though, as you will presently see, it suits me to say something about that conduct. I have no particular reason for addressing *to you* my remarks on the other topics at the head of this Letter. Your *name* will serve to distinguish this Letter from others; and, I want a

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name *for* it, as it will contain matter to be frequently referred to hereafter. I take your name now as I did that of Tierney in 1818. The letter of 11th July, 1818, which contained the *warning* as to the consequences of Peel's Bill, is now called "*Letter to Tierney*" (I wish you would read it); and this letter, which will contain a new prophecy, will, in a year's time or so, be referred to under the name of "*Letter to Wodehouse.*" The *legal-tender* project, broached by Castlereagh on the 29th of April, is, as I will show you, a repeal of Peel's Bill to a certain extent; but I mean to show you, that that is only a *beginning* in the way of repeal; and, as here will be a *prophesying* again, your name to the Letter will be *handy*, because, most assuredly, this is the only Letter I shall ever address to you.

I shall first notice your *censure on me*; not that it gives me *offence*, for the feeling it excites, after what I heard when in Norfolk, really is that of *compassion*. I can make allowances, and large allowances too, for persons in *your situation*. But, it is the *question*: it is the great question from which my name is become inseparable: that question and my name are going all over the world together. A mention has been made of me in parliament: therefore I must take care to *put the matter straight*. People, in you, hear a *Member of Parliament*: in me, they hear *William Cobbett*.

The grounds on which you thought proper to introduce my name are very curious. Mr. Coke, your colleague, in presenting a petition from a district in Norfolk, stated, that the petitioners had wished to have an open and public meeting; but that the magistrates of the district (two *Parsons*) to whom they applied according to Six-Acts, refused to sanction such meeting. It was strange enough, that you could not defend the conduct of these magistrates without putting forth *censure on me!* I shall insert here the report, from the *Morning Chronicle*, of what was said, as to this point, by YOU, by Mr. Denison, and by Mr. Bennet.

Mr. WODEHOUSE.—He (Mr. Coke) had alluded to the refusal of the magistrates to call the meeting of the Hundred. He (Mr. W.) had a conversation with one of those magistrates on the subject. He would not say whether the reason for refusing the Meeting was good or not, but certainly such language had been used at public meetings, he would not say in Norfolk, but other counties, that it was no wonder magistrates were reluctant to

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sanction such Meetings. He was now bound to explain himself: when the Meeting was called for Norfolk, it was in that wretched state, that *two persons were executed*, and *about one hundred in prison*; and the unfortunate men, upon going out of the world, stated, that their only object in violating the laws was to *frighten the farmers to increase their allowance*. What then must be the effect of such language as was used in other counties? He alluded particularly to *that of Surrey*, where a Noble Lord, he would not hesitate to name him—*Lord King*—had held forth in terms of *unqualified panegyric respecting Mr. Cobbett*; (*hear, hear!*) that speech was reprinted and *circulated through the county of Norfolk*, and they had *more of Mr. Cobbett's company that year than before*, and it was a place that *suited him best*, as there was *more distress* there than in any other. He was surprised at the respect which the Noble Lord expressed for *that man* who, he ought to know, had *no regard for the rights of property*. He was sorry that he had expressed such an opinion—it was unwise towards the country, *unkind towards the people*, and unworthy of the high station which he held (*loud cries of hear, hear! from the Ministerial benches*).

Mr. DENISON.—With regard to the allusions made to a Noble Lord, he (Mr. D.) could take it upon himself to give all the facts charged the flattest contradiction. —(Hear.) He was near Lord King at the Surrey Meeting, and he knew that the Noble Lord did *not pass an unqualified* panegyric upon Mr. Cobbett. His words were, "that he had now in his eye "a public writer, to whom, what-"ever gentlemen might think of "his opinion, the country was "greatly indebted for the clear "manner in which he delivered "his sentiments, and that in his "opinion he was generally right." —(Hear.) And it really was his (Mr. D.'s) own opinion, that whatever might be said of Mr. Cobbett, *his predictions in most instances were verified*; for was it not a fact that the country was now reduced to that state, that it was impossible for the Noble Lord over the way to collect the taxes under present circumstances and with the *present currency?*—(Hear).

Mr. BENNET said, that he also felt himself called upon to speak in defence of a Noble Lord, who had been alluded to. Having been present at the meeting, he was thus enabled to speak from personal observation of the part which Lord King took upon that occasion. It was true the Noble Lord did eulogise Mr. Cobbett, but in so doing he was, in his (Mr. B.'s) opinion, perfectly right; and he (Mr. B.) would have done the same under similar circumstances. Lord King spoke of Mr. Cobbett as an able public writer—*who could deny it?* who could say that he was not a most able and intelligent writer, and that his opinions in the main were not correct?—(Hear.) —Mr. Cobbett was, in truth, a writer, to whose literary labour the country was much indebted, for he set things in a proper view; and, in fact, all that credit which was given many public men, who had gained a reputation by acting upon his suggestions, was attributable to him alone. In speaking then of such a man, *why should not Lord King be at liberty to say what his opinion of him was?* Was not the opinion of Lord King quite as valuable as that of the Honourable Member (Mr. Wodehouse,) and as likely to be correctly formed?

Mr. WODEHOUSE, in explanation, observed, that he was still borne out in what he had said of Lord King praising Mr. Cobbett. He had a note of the Noble Lord's words, which were these: "*He is*

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"*the most able writer of this or any* "*other times.*"—(Loud cheers from the Opposition.)—He had never said more than that the Noble Lord eulogised Mr. Cobbett. With regard to this individual having been much in the county of Norfolk of late, he was proceeding to state—

The SPEAKER here interfered, and observed that the petition having been brought up, there was then no question before the house, and to proceed in the debate was irregular. The Right Honourable Gentleman then put the question "that it do lie upon the table;" upon which—

Mr. WODEHOUSE resumed. He had been stating that recently Mr. Cobbett was very much in Norfolk; and to that he should add, that *his efforts there were all turned to encourage the growth of discontent and disaffection.* Upon more occasions than one he had declared "that the *farmers were all brutes.*"—(A laugh)—that there was nothing shabby that they would not do; and that in fine, they were *starving their labourers*, and doing *every thing disgraceful to human nature.*—Could any one see such a man held up as an object of admiration by a Peer of the Realm *without fear*? The Hon. Member had attacked him (Mr. W.) for attacking Lord King, but was not his character of the Noble Lord warranted by his speeches in the House of Lords?—(Cries of Order.) He could assure Gentlemen he had no disposition to pursue the subject, and he adverted to it a second time, not with a view to vilify Lord King, but to state that he was not in a humour to retract one word of what he had said.

Mr. MABERLY observed that the best reason to suppose that Lord King had formed a right estimate of Mr. Cobbett was, that *his sentiments were approved of by the Meeting he was addressing.* It would be well if certain Gentlemen could submit their opinions to such a test as the voice of the people, and come off harmless.—(Hear.)

Now, Sir, first of all, Mr. Denison was wrong. There were no *qualifications* in Lord King's speech. He was speaking of the errors of Webb Hall; and he observed, that, if any one had not the time to bestow on his evidence, it would be sufficient to read what had been said on the subject "by "one of the most able and enter-"taining writers of the present or "any other day." That was *all.* That was every word. And this is what has been swelled up by you into a lofty panegyric! I had never even *seen* Lord King before; though his lordship could not have failed to recollect, that when the base and foolish paper faction raised a popular cry against him in 1812, because he would not receive his rents in a paper which they have now acknowledged to have been depreciated at the time; he could not have failed to recollect, that, at that time, I was not so much the enemy of "*the rights of property*," as not to disdain popular clamour when it was my duty to defend his lordship's rights.

But, suppose Lord King had uttered an unqualified panegyric

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on me; suppose he had said, that I was the most able of all political writers; suppose he had held me up as an object of admiration (oh! "*shocking!*"); what had this to do with the conduct of the two *Parson-Magistrates?* what justification did this form for them? why, the praises of Lord King on me had been *printed and circulated in Norfolk.* And what then? They had not been printed and circulated by me. But, *what then?* The parson-magistrates might very well be "*shocked*" at the praises; but, what had they to do with the intended meeting? Did the *shocked* parson-magistrates expect Lord King, or me, or both, at the meeting? What *reason*, then, was this for the conduct of the fire-shovel-hat magistrates?

But, I have been more in Norfolk of *late* than *formerly*. Why, I never was in Norfolk but three times, making 18 days altogether; and never before last *September*. But, have I not as much right in Norfolk as you have? Some years back, you would, perhaps, have thought of "*interfering*" as the Manchester Magistrates did, when I was about to pass through that town. Those days of "*prosperity*" are, thank God, passed never to return, be you well assured! And, pray, upon what do you found your assertion, that I have "no regard to the *rights of property?*" I think I understand those rights full as well as you do; and, I think, if you had *read* instead of abused, you would, long ago, have discovered, that I would, if I could have had my will, have *preserved property*, and not suffered it to be taken away, as it now is, by *legerdemain*. Landlords would have had property still, if they had followed my advice; and, having rejected it, they are in a fair way of having none. Do you allude to my opinions as to the *game?* I have the authority of Blackstone for that, and of every man that ever wrote on the law of nature and of nations. If, however, you think so much of the hares and partridges and so little of the land on which they live, the Jews will, I dare say, have no objection to your exclusive enjoyment of the former.

But, what do you mean by *property?* It must certainly be *game* and *boroughs* that you have in your eye; for, do you imagine that I have *nothing*, then, but the clothes on my back? I believe I have, though just beginning the world afresh, *as much property as you.* I think my copyrights *equal in value to your estate;* and that,

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if I were never to write another word, they would yield a *larger rent*. Not than your estate *now yields*; for, to talk of *that* would be a cruel mockery; but, larger than it *ever yielded*. You "Country-Gentlemen," as you are called, or, rather, as you call yourselves, seem to look upon all the rest of us as a parcel of *runnagates* that have neither house nor home. Just as if my property is not as good as yours. Just as if that which is of my *own creation* is not as much *property* as your land is, whatever you may happen to have of it; and just as if my right to be in Norfolk is not as good as yours is, ever was, or ever will be.

The truth is, that I have been thought, and by no bad judges, to adhere too much to the interest of what you call *property*; to uphold the landowners *more* than I ought to have done; to give them an unjust preference. At any rate, if the sets be ruined, they cannot say that the fault is mine, seeing that, from first to last, I have opposed every measure that has had a tendency to produce that ruin. If my advice had been followed, the "*property*," as you call it, would not have been in its present state. If I had been sitting in the *seat* that you have filled so long, the present miserable state of things *could not have existed*. I say distinctly, and I am sure the country will echo the opinion, that, if I had filled the seat that you fill, the present state of things *could not have existed*. And, if you were now to consult even *your own interest*, you would beg the parsons and others of Norfolk to elect me in your place! Those are not the wisest owners of ships and coaches, who take the helm and reins into their own hands!

But, Norfolk, you say, "suited "me *best* because there was "*more distress* there than in any "other county." Neither is true; but, suppose it had been so? If I thought it most likely to produce impression on men in *distress*, what was there *wrong* in that? There remained to be settled, the question, whether the impression that I sought to make was *good* or *bad*; and, it was your business to show, that it was *bad*; a thing which you did not attempt to do. The impression that I sought to produce in the minds of the farmers was this: that prices would *not get up*; that they would be ruined if they proceeded upon *any such calculation*; that, if they had families, it was their duty not to give their

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last shilling to the landlord and parson; that the poor-rate arose from the taxes; that it became all of us, who happened to be better off than labourers, to make their case our own, and to be considerate towards them. This was the doctrine I preached in Norfolk; and, though my hearers were mostly farmers, I never omitted the latter. I did, indeed, never omit *parliamentary reform*, and who can omit it that really wishes to see things put to rights? And, as for my own *private interest*, how can I, in this conduct, have consulted *that*? For, how is it *possible* for any state of things to be so *profitable* to me as the present, when every day is fulfilling some prediction of mine, and making, of course, an addition to that, which, in the eyes of most men, would be more valuable than all other things put together?

What Mr. Bennet said was strictly true. It was no more than what all his hearers knew indeed; but, the occasion having called for it, it was *just* to say it; because, I, as well as Lord King, was *not present* to answer for myself; and, further, because there were no means possessed by me of making my answer co-extensive in its circulation with your attack. What Mr. Bennet said was also right in another respect. There is no credit to be derived from the studious and constant endeavour to suppress the fact, that, upon this subject of the nation's distresses I have, all along been *right*, and, until now, been *alone*. Much greater credit is to be gained by the acknowledgment of the fact; for, while it is much too notorious to be hidden from the nation, the nation is just enough to applaud the candour of those who acknowledge it. The "*Higher Orders*" do not perceive how narrowly they are *watched* as to this matter. It is so *dead a set*; so complete a *pitting* of me against the "*education of the country*;" that every motion of both is most attentively observed; and, strange as it may seem to you, Mr. Wodehouse, and to the Magistrate-Parsons of Norfolk, every inch I gain upon the "*education*" draws forth shouts of joy from hundreds of thousands. Do you think, that the *people* do not see *clean through* the poor attempt that the "Education" is making in the project upon which I am presently to remark? They know as well as Castlereagh himself what it is that makes him repeal Peel's Bill *by degrees*. And what is their feeling on this account: what

can it be other than that of *inexpressible contempt?*

Before I proceed to examine this project of *Legal-tender*, I shall, agreeably to the title of my letter, notice the case of the *Starving Irish*. Mr. Gooch says, that reform would not put a *sixpence into the farmer's pockets*. Perhaps he will say, that it would not put a mouthful into the heads of these starving people. But, he will, I suppose, allow, that it could not do them *any harm!* Will he allow, that these people are not likely to *change for the worse?* Because, if he will but allow that, we have an argument in favour of reform. I shall take the words of Sir E. O'Brien, as contained in the report of the Morning Chronicle. The truth of them was *not denied;* nor was it even doubted. Take the picture, and say whether it was ever exceeded by any instance of national misery in any age or under any government.

Sir E. O'BRIEN proceeded to address the House, amidst loud cries of "Go on, go on!" He wished to point out to the Gentlemen around him, the very dreadful and calamitous situation to which a great portion of his countrymen were reduced. There were at this moment thousands of persons in Ireland, who, in consequence of the failure of the late potatoe crop, *were reduced to a single meal a day, and that meal generally consisted of oatmeal and water* (hear, hear!). It was known that, generally speaking, the whole population of the South of Ireland lived *during a great portion of the year upon potatoes;* but, during the last year, the incessant rains which prevailed, had totally decayed and destroyed that vegetable in the ground. At the late assizes in his (Sir E. O'Brien's) County, the distressed state of the people was taken into consideration, and a representation of that distress was made to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He had no doubt of the *kind* and *benevolent* intentions of the Noble Lord, who now filled the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but it was impossible to extend relief to that poor and suffering country, without the interference and aid of Parliament (hear, hear!). It was a lamentable fact, that at this moment the counties of Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Mayo, and Roscommon, in fact, the whole provinces of Munster and Connaught, were in a state of actual starvation (hear, hear!). If the counties of Lancaster, or Warwick, or Stafford, were distressed and suffering as Ireland now is, what, he would ask, would be the feelings of that House? What would be the effect produced upon the agricultural interests of the country? What were the people of that unfortunate and distressed country to do? How were they, deprived as they were of money, of any resource, to relieve themselves from the difficulties under which they laboured? He well remembered the situation in which Ireland was placed in 1817. Great as the distresses of the country were at that period, there was still *a circulation of money*, and a high price of corn, which afforded many openings of relief. But what was the situation of the country now? There was scarcely a town in the south of Ireland, in which hundreds of strong, able bodied men, were

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not to be seen walking about without any means of getting employment. (hear, hear!) The question for the consideration of the House was—"What produced this state of things?" *One-third of the respectable people of the county of Clare had been reduced to absolute distress; they had neither money nor means to relieve themselves.* He was aware that there was *plenty of corn in the market*; but what did that do towards relief, when the distressed parties had *no money to buy*? It was true that the gentry of the county were, in many instances, ready to co-operate with the magistrates in affording relief—but what then? How was it possible for a few individuals to afford permanent relief to 100,000 or 150,000 men? (hear, hear!). In making this statement, he did not appear before the House as a mendicant on the part of his country (hear, hear!). All he asked was, that Government would *make advances* to relieve the present distresses of unfortunate Ireland. For these advances the county rates should be pledged, and the money might be laid out in *repairing roads*, or in such other manner as might be deemed best calculated to afford *general relief*. The case which he advocated was not an idle one. It was well known to many of his friends, that *thousands were at this moment dying from famine in Ireland.* He was most anxious to make this statement at the earliest period, with a view to draw the attention of Government to it, for unless relief was promptly afforded, the unfortunate population must suffer the last stage of misery. In proof of this he begged that gentlemen would consider the present, as compared with the former prices of food in that country. A short time ago, potatoes, the principal food of the peasantry of Ireland, were sold at from one penny to three halfpence per stone; during this year they were sold at sixpence halfpenny per stone (hear!). While this general article of Irish consumption was so raised, oatmeal was also raised much in value. It had, in fact, risen from 13*l.* to 15*l.* per ton (hear!). The Hon. Bart. after pointing out with great clearness and effect the other distresses under which the people of Ireland laboured, as well as the causes which produced these distresses, adverted to the fact of the *poor people in Ireland being actually obliged to rob for their support.* He had himself been informed by the head police officer in his county, that if they were *to commit all the persons who took provisions* for their support, no *gaol in the country could hold them*; nay, farther, that the parties so arrested, *if they could get their families around* them, would think that they *had made a happy exchange in getting into prison* (hear, hear!). The Honourable Baronet concluded by expressing a hope that Parliament would take into its serious consideration the distressed and suffering state of Ireland.

There are not many "*surrounding nations*" that will "*envy*" us this, I think, Mr. Wodehouse! This is taking place, too, at a time, when the nation is plunged into "*distress*" by "*over-production!*" Well; now let us see, then, what is to be the *remedy*. Those Ministers that you support have a *remedy* for this. They have a project for affording "*relief.*" It is this, Lord Castlereagh says: *two millions of money are to be voted*, one to send *food* to the sufferers, and one to set them to work on *public works!* Bravo! This last is agreeable to the real *hole-digging* principle! *Public*

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Works! The farmers cannot afford to pay the labourers to work for *their benefit*; but, they are to afford to pay taxes to pay the labourers for working on public works! Well, Sir; I give you joy of the Ministers you support! I give you joy of these famous projects.

Here we have, in this memorable night, two projects broached; one, to lay out a million of taxes to take corn into *pawn*, in order to prevent *a further fall in the price*, the price being already so low from *over-production*: another to lay out another million of taxes in *food* to be sent to a part of the people who are *starving!* There! match that, reformed parliament, whenever you may come! Match that! These are projects coming from the "*mind*" of the nation; from "the *education* of the country," and not from the "*basest populace.*" The latter would never have been able to discover projects like these. Look at Ireland, Mr. Wodehouse. Look at it as painted by the loyal Mr. O'Brien; and then tell us, whether you think, that we *Jacobins* should have managed things any great deal more ably. Any fool can reduce a people to starvation in times of *scarcity*; but it requires, it seems, the "*Education* of the Country" to bring them into this state in a season of *over-production!*

It does not appear to have accurred to Mr. O'Brien, that this starvation may possibly have been occasioned by *the taxes!* Oh, dear, no! For Castlereagh, as cool as a cucumber, says, on this very occasion, that, if *all* the taxes were taken off, it would afford no relief whatever! This Mr. O'Brien says, that there is plenty of corn in the market; but that there is *no money to buy it with.* These are money to buy corn for the soldiers, sailors, placemen, pensioners and fundholders; but there is no money to buy corn for these starving labouring people, *who have raised the corn!* That is very odd, is it not, Mr. O'Brien? The oddest thing in the world, that those who do the work should have no money to buy corn with; and that those who do not do any work should have money to buy corn with. And where do the soldiers and placemen and fundholders get the money that they have to buy corn with? Do they not get it from those that work and raise the corn? And if they did not get it from them, would not those who work and raise the corn have money to buy corn with? And yet a whole crowd of people sit in silence

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while they are unblushingly told that taxes have not a tendency to produce distress in those who pay them!

Mr. O'BRIEN did not touch upon matter like this. He did not say a word about stopping the operations of the taxgatherer and the tithe-factor. He wanted *relief from the parliament*. He wanted food to be sent to the starving creatures; and this was right enough; but where and when and how is this to end? Not a word about *mismanagement*. Not a word about any reform in the governing of Ireland. The wretched farmers themselves are broken up. The food of their very cattle is taken away and they are dying, and yet, not a single word about a change in the mode of managing the affairs of the country!

The subject of taxation not being the cause of distress was introduced upon this occasion by CASTLEREAGH in rather a new sort of way. He *congratulated the House* upon its having rejected the *wild notion* that taxes had an effect in producing distress. He said that he had maintained this opinion upon a former occasion. "And, in support of that opinion, "he had since received the sanc- "tion and confirmation of the "*highest authority*, upon such "subjects, and, in naming the "Hon. Member for Portarling- "ton (Mr. Ricardo), he felt he "was alluding to a person whose "opinions *must necessarily have* "*a great weight with the Com-* "*mittee.*" Why, yes. He and the member for Portarlington are certainly much about upon a level in many respects. The latter has very lately said that he regarded the country as being *in a most prosperous state;* and, to be sure, if this be not prosperity that we are in now, we must be a people very difficult to please! Nevertheless, to such a state are the landlords reduced, that they have no means of making a stand against any thing that may be attempted. They are absolutely so sunk as hardly to dare to open their mouths; or, they never would endure this. I now come to the main topic of my letter; namely the *Legal-tender* project; or, in other words, the project for gently and indirectly repealing Peel's Bill. The Pawning project I shall pass over, and also that for *funding* the *half-pay and pensions of the army and navy!* A thing to laugh at for a year; a thing full of all that is ridiculous; a thing perfectly *farcical;* but a thing unworthy

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of much time bestowed on it, when we have before us the grand project for making a beginning in the repeal of Peel's Bill. I shall take the whole of the passage from Castlereagh's Speech on this subject; and the equal of it was, surely, never seen or heard of before. It is a matter of vast importance. It requires to be fully examined and developed, that the public may see every part of the scheme in its true light. I shall first insert the passage, and then endeavour to give the several parts such an arrangement as shall divest the thing of the *botheration* in which it is enveloped.

Before, however, I put this mass of stuff upon paper, let me state to you, Sir, at this moment, the Bank of England notes are a *legal tender;* that is to say, if a debtor have a mind to pay in Bank of England notes, you have no way of *forcing* him to pay in gold or silver. Country Bankers are not compelled to pay their own notes in gold or silver; but may tender you Bank of England notes, and if you refuse to receive them, they can set you at defiance. This is "pretty *cash-payments*," to be sure; but, by Peel's Bill, the whole of this *legal tender* is to cease *next May;* that is to say, this very day twelve months!

That is one thing which you have to bear in mind. Now for another thing. Before Pitt and his privy council authorised the Bank to refuse to pay its notes in 1797, there was an act of parliament in force, which prevented the issuing of any promissory notes or Bills of Exchange *under the sum of five pounds*. This act was, of course, suspended when the Bank stoppage took place; but since that, in order to come back to the "*ancient standard of value*," at which Lord Grenville and Mr. Tierney were in such haste to arrive, an act was passed to forbid Country Bankers to issue any notes under five pounds, after May 1825; that is to say, after three years from this day.

Keeping these things in mind, pray read with attention the pretty little piece of botheration that I am now about to lay before you from the speech of our great political philosopher.

"The house was probably aware that the act of Parliament by which private banks were allowed to issue notes under the value of 5*l.* would expire in the year 1825. All transactions for a smaller amount must afterwards, in that case, be carried on in a metallic currency. (Hear, hear.) Now the period

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when this would occur was *so near at hand*, that it behoved Parliament, without further loss of time, to come to some *resolution on the subject*. Either it should make up its mind to extend the duration of the act, or give some distinct notice that the law would *inevitably be permitted to take its course*. It was true that private banks, which had their own small notes in public circulation, were *already preparing to meet the necessity which would arise*, if the act were suffered to expire. One of the results of this preparation was, that they did not act up *to the scale of their own credit*, and that the *pressure on the general circulation was augmented*. Should Parliament be of opinion that the best *course of policy* would be *to substitute a metallic currency*, still ample notice ought to be given; and it should be distinctly understood that no delay would take place. *Great efforts might become necessary* to meet the ensuing period, as the effect of such a decision might be to place the *circulation of Europe*, as well as of this country, *on a metallic basis*. (Hear, hear, hear.)—The time now fixed was *rapidly approaching*, and they ought not to hesitate longer on the proceeding which might be most judiciously adopted. In the present state of things he should now state to the house, that his Majesty's ministers, after the fullest deliberation, had considered it most expedient and prudent to submit, that the act in question *should be prolonged for several years*, or, in other words, that its duration should be made co-extensive with the charter of the Bank of England. (Hear, hear.) That charter will not expire *till the year* 1833. If the country was now actually suffering from the effects of measures, which were only essential in order to accomplish the *moral object* of returning to our ancient standard, it was of the greatest importance not to render that inconvenience and suffering *yet more severe* by *needlessly withdrawing* the smaller notes from circulation. (Loud cries of "hear, hear.") He could scarcely conceive that *any advantage* would attend a considerable increase of the *gold currency*, for the experience of the Bank proved that it was *against the taste of the public*, and that if issued in large quantities, it returned upon the Bank, and was *gladly exchanged for paper*. It was hardly necessary for him to observe, that if the plan of which he was endeavouring to trace an outline should be adopted, Parliament would of course provide amongst other regulations, that no private bank which paid its own notes in those of *the Bank of England* should be *liable to insolvency*. His right hon. friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) would shortly bring forward a measure, for the purpose of *guarding against any abuse under this head*; and undoubtedly it would be a point gained, if unexceptionable security could be combined with an increased *facility of banking*. True it was, as had been justly remarked by an hon. gent. opposite on a late occasion, that property could not be rendered uniformly secure, but that *some improvement* in the system upon which our banking establishments were conducted was obvious. With a view to *this improvement*, a *negotiation* had been opened between Government and the Bank. The object of it was to induce the latter to consent to a relaxation of its charter so far as to *permit firms, consisting of more than six partners*, to commence business as bankers, provided it was not within the sphere of its monopoly, or the distance *of sixty-five miles from London*. With this proviso, full liberty would be given to the formation of *joint stock banking companies all over England*. In calling their attention to the banks in Scotland, he might remark that there were 23 with charters, besides others, consisting in some instances

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of from 50 to 60 partners. Yet *so sound and salutary were* the principles on which the banking system was conducted, that in a country where the people were not apt to expose their property to too great hazard, they had never shewn themselves averse to *deposit their money* with these establishments, and had always felt themselves secure against illicit speculation. Something beneficial there must be in a system which had *passed through a tempest like that* which had raged for a long period, and outlived all those tremendous shocks which property had been compelled to encounter. Whilst in England, banks had been falling in various districts at succeeding periods, not one example of the kind had occurred in Scotland, or but one of which he had recently heard, and which he was not sure had actually taken place."

Here we have the beginning of the great work. Here we have a new scheme of Banks and Banking. Here all is to be paper again. That "*ancient standard of our ancestors*," of which the Speaker spoke in so lofty a style to the Regent; that "*healthy currency*;" that "*moral symbol*;" that precious thing which was agreed to amidst the unanimous cheers of both houses; this which was to immortalize the parliament that enacted it, vanishes like a shadow, and forth comes a whole tribe of chartered Banks; country rags are rendered perpetual; and legal tender is to supply the place of "*healthy currency*" and "*moral symbol*."

I shall follow the order in which I find these barefaced assertions; this worse than burlesque statement and exhibition, as nearly as I can. In the first place, May 1826 is not so very *near at hand!* Why should parliament be in such a hurry? Why should it make any declaration at all? The act is passed, and that is enough. There is an act of parliament, which is to have effect in three years from this time, and for what reason is the parliament to *do any thing at all* about the matter? The parliament is now called upon to *make up its mind*. Why it did make up its mind. It passed the act; and what is it to give any *notice* about the matter for? This is like asking a girl to make up her mind after she is wedded and before she is bedded.

Come, come; no tricks; no shuffling! It was intended that the Bill should go into effect. It was intended that the small notes should cease. It was intended, in short, to return to cash-payments in reality; but the thing has been found *impossible*. "Should parliament be of "opinion that the *best course of* "*policy* would be to *substitute* "*a metallic currency*." What the devil is this? Should parliament

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(after passing Peel's Bill, mind,) be of *opinion* that the best *course of policy* would be to *substitute a metallic currency!* Of *opinion!* Why they have *enacted*, have they not? Have they not enacted that they will return to a metallic currency? a "healthy currency;" a "moral symbol." And do we now hear it put as a matter of *doubt*, whether parliament will be of *opinion* that this will be the best *course of policy?*

However, we are soon to discover what is meant by all this; for we are told, that, should parliament be of *opinion* (after passing Peel's Bill, mind again,) should parliament be of *opinion*, that it is the best course of policy to pay in cash, "*great efforts might become necessary.*" What! Great efforts necessary? What to do? Why, to "meet the ensuing period." What period? Why all this fuss about country one pound notes? Why all this *alarm* lest the country ragmen should be compelled to pay in gold? I thought that this was the thing that was wanted. Here was an act passed to give it us; and yet now great efforts may be wanted! And why these great efforts? This is the reason, and pray attend to it; not you Mr. WODEHOUSE, but you, farmers, who heard my rustic harangues at *Battle*, at *Huntingdon*, and at *Lynn*. Pray listen, while this great political philosopher tells you the cause of these "*great efforts*" that will be wanted.

Great efforts, he says, may become necessary to meet the ensuing period; because, (and now mind) the "effect of such a "*decision*, might be to place the "*circulation of Europe*, as well "as of this country, *on a metallic* "*basis.*" Oh! monstrous! So, then, after all; after Peel's Bill; after the bragging speech of the speaker; after the endless high sounding stuff about the *ancient standard* of our *ancestors*; after *healthy currency* and *moral symbol*; after all the boasting of having *got rid* of the paper; after all the abuse of Lord GRENVILLE upon the "*paper bubble*," we are told that *great efforts* will be necessary, *if we decide* upon placing our currency on a *metallic basis!*

But, "*decide!*" What does the man mean by *deciding?* Was not the thing decided; was it not resolved unanimously by both houses; was it not *enacted* in Peel's Bill; does the thing not make an act of parliament; and does not Peel's Bill say this: "Whereas it is expedient that a

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"*definite period should be fixed* "for the termination of such re-"strictions, and that measures "should be taken to *ensure*, on "the arrival of that period, the "payment of the promissory notes "of the Bank of England in the "*legal coin of the realm*, Be it, "therefore, enacted, and so forth?" And is it, after this, that we hear this man talk about whether it should be the *opinion* of parliament; and about some *decision* to be had relative to a metallic basis for our currency? This is pretty stuff, indeed! But, what I wish my hearers at Battle at Huntingdon and at Lynn to attend to, is this. They will recollect that I endeavoured to convince them, *that prices must come down* a great deal lower than they were. My argument was this. When the period arrives, at which the country Bank notes shall be *payable in gold on demand*, those notes must disappear and leave nothing in their stead; or *gold must come from abroad* to supply their place. This will *lower prices abroad;* and our prices must keep following those prices, till they come very nearly to a level with them; because, the currency of this country being the same as the currency of France, it will be impossible that our prices of produce should long continue much above theirs.

On this I founded my opinion, that if Peel's Bill went into *full effect*, our wheat, upon an average of years, would be even *less than four shillings a bushel.* The pretty gentlemen at Whitehall seem, at last, to have had a little of this light penetrate into their skulls; for here we find our great political philosopher observing that to do away our small country rags would be placing the *currency of Europe*, as well as of this country, on a *metallic basis.* It is monstrous, to be sure, to find our pretty gentlemen *alarmed* at this; but, it is clear that they have made the discovery; and, as we are now about to see, they have taken a pretty firm resolution, that *our currency, at any rate, shall have a basis of paper and not a basis of metal!* Their measures (measures which they are actually going to propose observe) for effecting this purpose, are two-fold, or, rather three-fold. First, to repeal the Bill that would put a stop to the small notes of country Bankers. This they intend to do immediately; in order that the country Bankers may be under no *apprehensions* as to the effect of the Act of which we have been speaking; and that they

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may continue to pour forth their rags with their usual "*liberality*." No doubt they will be liberal enough, if any one will give them any thing for their rags.

But, it is the next measure that is the grand stroke, and that will actually be a repeal of Peel's Bill in part; namely, to make Bank of England notes continue to be, after May 1823, a *legal tender in exchange for the country rags as they are at this day!* This is the stroke! This is intended to *keep the gold from circulating about the country, just as it now is kept.* But only mind the *pretences* here. If, says our great political philosopher, the country is now suffering from the effects of measures (Peel's Bill) "which were only "essential in order to accomplish "the '*moral object*' of returning "to our '*ancient standard*,' it "was of the greatest importance "not to make that suffering more "severe by '*needlessly* with-"drawing the small notes from "circulation.'"

What must this man *think of his hearers!* "The *moral object*"! What can he mean by this jargon? What! was it a mere paying for a week or a year, then? Was it to be a mere *matter of form*, as a man suffers a cane to be drawn across his shoulders? Or, as the copyholder surrenders his land to the lord of the manor by presenting a little twig? Was it to be a thing of this sort? And was this to be all! Was this to satisfy *Lord Grenville?* Oh, monstrous! Any thing so barefaced never was heard of before. But, in this hour of trepidation, and of confusion of ideas, what will not pass? "*Loud cries of hear, hear!*" when he said, that the *small notes were to be kept in circulation!* Aye, and from that very same Assembly, who, with unanimous voice, had passed Peel's Bill, which "set the question *at rest for ever*," which delivered the country from the "*paper-bubble*," and which gave us the "*ancient standard of our ancestors*"!

We have next two sentences the equal of which are not to be found in any speech that ever fell from the lips of mortal man. First we are told, that the people *do not like gold;* and, then, immediately afterwards, that it will be *necessary to guard against their demands for it.* "He could "scarcely conceive that any "advantage would attend a con-"siderable increase of the gold "currency; for the Bank had "*proved* that it *was against the* "*taste of the public;* and that, "if issued, it was returned, and

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"*gladly exchanged for paper.*" Very well, then. A little gold will do. There need be no fear of paying in cash; for the people have *no taste for gold.* Now, mark the *sincerity* of this assertion. "Parliament would, *of course,* "provide, that no private bank "which *paid its own notes in those* "*of the bank of England,* should "be *liable to insolvency*"! Why, provide for this? Why *compel* the people to take paper, if they have *no taste for gold?* What *needless* work such a provision of parliament must be! What! the people do *not like gold;* and yet you will pass a law to *compel them to take paper;* and that, too, for "the *moral object*" of returning to the "ancient standard of our ancestors"!

This *exposes* the whole thing. This lets all out. This tells us, at once, what is meant; namely, that we are to have a currency in which the Bank of England paper is to be a *legal tender.* We are to have a system which shall *force* a paper-money on the country; and that this is to be the permanent system. That this is a repeal of Peel's Bill in part is as clear as day-light; for, how stands the case? According to Peel's Bill all *legal-tender* ceases on the 1st of May, 1823. As we now, at *this time,* stand, there is a *legal tender.* Any man may pay in Bank of England notes, if he choose, and may refuse other payment. But, the main thing is this. The Country Ragmen can *refuse you gold for their notes.* They do this now all over the country; and, in Scotland, they will not exchange their own notes in gold even at a *discount* on their own notes! This is the cause why the gold does not get about the country. The people *want* it. They would not keep the rags in their tills and drawers for an hour. But, they cannot get the gold. The Ragmen take special care to be supplied with the Mother Bank Notes; and those the people in the country do not like so well as the Country-Rags, because so liable to forgery. Thus the Rags are kept out, and the gold coin is confined pretty much to London and its vicinity, where there are no country-rags.

This is the state of things *now:* but, let Peel's Bill go into full effect; let *legal tender be put an end to;* let the Ragman be *compelled* to give *gold;* and not Mother Bank notes in exchange for his rags; let the country people be able to go to him next May, with Peel's Bill, in their hand, and say, "give me a *sovereign* for this rag;" let that happy day come, and then we see gold all over the country, and wheat, on an average of years, at *four shillings a bushel,* or, perhaps, at *three shillings!*

This is what I have been telling the money-hoarders for a long time. Ah! but, this "happy day" is not to arrive! Castlereagh is coming with his measure to be submitted to the "*wisdom* of parliament," and it is *now* to *decide,* whether or not it be the best "*course of policy* to establish a *metallic basis!*" In short, a *law* is now to be proposed to enable country-bankers *to refuse to pay in gold* after May 1823, and until May 1833! Make it *for ever!* None of your haggling about it. It is eternity. Never shall we see cash-payments as long as the borough-system lasts. Here is, however, a clear, a defi-

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nite, an effectual repeal of Peel's Bill, as to a very essential part of it. That Bill cannot now (when this law shall be passed) go into *full effect*. Thus will my Long Island prophecy be fulfilled; and thus will the *Gridiron* become my *symbol*, my *sign*, and my *crest*. The very next day after the passing of the bill, up goes a gridiron, six feet and a half across, on the Office of the Register, No. 183, Fleet-street; and there it remains, till the borough-bank-notes shall be no more!

However, this *legal-tender work* is not all the work that will be done. *More* will be done, during even this session I imagine; but I am sure more will be done long before *this day twelve months*. The repeal of that part of Peel's Bill which relates to *legal tender* will prevent the gold from getting about the country, as the legal-tender law *now does*. It will prevent prices from falling *lower*, on an average of seasons, than their present mark; but it will do little more. It will prevent us from drawing *our proper share of gold from abroad;* and will thereby prevent a further fall of prices abroad; but it will not tend to *raise prices* or *lighten the burden* of taxation here. The fund-holder will not get *more* than he now gets; but this scheme will not take any of his present gains from him. All that this legal-tender scheme will do, therefore, is, to prevent the landlord from being ruined *faster* than he now is.

To make *prices rise*, by means of currency-measures, there must be a *further* repeal of Peel's Bill. There must be a change in the price at which the borough-bank is to issue *base*; and she must be "restrained" from issuing *coin* altogether. This would be the Devil to be sure; but, when once a *beginning* has been made, the thing may go on glibly enough. When once the Gridiron is hoisted in Fleet-street, there will not be much more of shame to swallow. Let them take one gulp, and down the dose will go to the bottom of their bowels.

Perhaps this session may pass over without any further repeal than this relating to the legal-tender. The landlords and parsons want all the paper back; but, in order to spare the feelings of their friends, they may be coaxed into a little delay, it being *understood* that the floodgates are to be opened *next year!* Besides, there is my *prophecy!* Oh! to see that accomplished! To hear that accomplishment noised about all over the world! Now, confess, Mr. Wodehouse, that this is no small matter; and that you really would *pinch* a little rather than have to live under this triumph, this signal, this boundless, triumph of mine! If it was so "*shocking*" to you to hear a word of commendation on me at a county-meeting in Surrey, what must it be to hear more, and much more, than half the nation, shouting out my triumph over the collective and unanimous wisdom!

Yet, the dose, the bitter dose, *must be swallowed*. One of two things must come, a *reduction of the interest of the Debt*, or a return to the "*paper-bubble*" whole and complete and co-existent with the borough-system. A reduction of the interest of the Debt, or a currency of *pure* paper, totally

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unrestrained by coin or by *bars*. One or the other will and must take place; and, from the speech of our great political philosopher, the latter appears to be resolved on; for here we have a project for establishing paper-mills and bank-note presses all over the country, *under the controul of the Government!* That is to say, a set of *new banks*, to have *larger quantities of notes than the present banks*. A new system of banking. A parcel of *chartered* banks. And this, too, just towards the *close of the period*, when the "ancient standard of our ancestors" was to be restored in all its solidity and all its purity! These banks will open, I dare say, with great eclat. There will be such speculating, such rivalship, such jobbing, and such a bragging about the resources and funds of the parties. In short, a new banking madness will rage throughout the land. The description given of the scheme is sufficiently amusing: "True it was," our great Castlereagh said, "as had been "justly remarked by an Hon. "Gent. opposite on a late occa- "sion, that property could not be "rendered *uniformly secure*, but "that *some improvement* in the "system upon which our banking "establishments were conducted "was obvious. With a view to "this *improvement*, a negociation "had been opened between Go- "vernment and the Bank. The "object of it was to induce the "latter to consent to a relaxation "of its charter so far as to *permit* "*firms, consisting of more than* "*six partners*, to commence busi- "ness as bankers, provided it was "not within the sphere of its mo- "nopoly, or the distance of 65 "*miles from London*. With this "proviso, full liberty would be "given to the formation of *joint-* "*stock banking companies all over* "*England*."

This is a likely way to "*return to cash-payments!*" It is so *probable*, that, if *cash*, were really intended to be the currency, this scheme would be resorted to. The hope is, that, by establishing these *chartered* banks, the government will be able to wheedle the people into a disregard for gold. But, if it were to succeed in this, it could not wheedle the Jews into a disregard for what they could get by fetching bars out of the Bank, if they could get only the price of an orange by one of those bars. After all, therefore, the scheme is perfectly idiotic, it is perfectly beastly, as to any object of *relief* to the landlords, unless the ultimate object be a return, not to the "ancient standard of our ancestors," but to the paper-bubble of Pitt in all its plenitude.

And this, I take it, will be the case. We may probably pass over the present session with nothing more being done than the passing of the *everlasting legal tender*. But, I think, that the next session will open with the *new-bank plan*. That will, I dare say, be represented as *a very different thing* from the banking that existed in 1819. The paper of the new banks will be described as *solidity* itself; and, I shall not be surprised to hear the present bank notes called *filthy rags*. There will be no occasion for a Peel's Bill when the paper is *so solid*; when it is, in *fact*, so much better than gold, and when the use of it saves the *expense* of so costly a standard as that of gold and silver.

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We shall never hear the word *Assignats* pronounced for fear of giving rise to unpleasant feelings; but, assignats this paper will be, the moment the Bank shall be protected against paying on demand, in gold at 77s. 10½d. an ounce.

The present scheme is, amongst other things, intended to *prevent the carrying of Mr. Western's motion*, which, I verily believe, would have been carried, had not this proposition come out in time. This may *pacify* the rentless landlords a little. They, be it observed, care less about "*Cobbett's prophecies*" than the pretty gentlemen do. They *hate me*, but they *want rents;* and to tell them, that they will fulfil my prophecies if they insist upon rents, is not quite enough to reduce them to absolute silence. The pretty gentlemen have, I dare say, tried this as far as it would go. "Only think," says HUMBUG to SIR NINNY NUMSKULL, "only think, my dear SIR NINNY, "what a thing it would be *for us* "*to call for the repeal of this* "*Bill!*"

SIR N. Aye, MR. HUMBUG, but think a little of my poor tenants.

HUM. It is very true, SIR NINNY; but, really farmers have been *too high* of late years; and I can see no harm in ———

SIR N. Very true, very true, very true, as you say: no harm in *their* coming down a little; but ———

HUM. Yes, I understand you: you cannot endure the idea of seeing their wives and families in a state of such anxiety; but, really, SIR NINNY, you must not suffer your humanity to get so far the better of your ———

SIR N. Very true; but, when one feels ———

HUM. Aye; there is the fault of you country-gentlemen. You *feel so much!* Your feelings are so fine, touched, as we know they are, by the cries even of *a hare;* that, really, SIR NINNY, it is difficult to get your nerves up to that degree of stiffness, which ought to characterise "the *education* of the country" in pursuing the "stern path of duty."

SIR N. But, as I was going to say before, when one feels ———

HUM. And as I must say again, SIR NINNY, though I beg pardon for interrupting you, you feel too much. You ought not to feel so acutely. Our humanity is to be subject to our wisdom as well as the most unruly and mischievous of our passions; and ———

SIR N. But, I say, Sir, when one feels ———

HUM. But you must not feel for the losses and what you call the *distress* of ———

SIR N. But, d—— it, when one feels *one's own distress!*

HUM. Oh! I beg pardon. That is a very different matter.

SIR N. What the Devil did you think I meant?

HUM. Indeed I beg pardon. *Your* distress is, indeed, a very different matter. But, SIR NINNY, be assured it is *temporary*. It arises merely from a "sudden transition from war to peace."

SIR N. The transition is, I think, MR. HUMBUG, pretty long going on.

HUM. Oh, no! my dear Sir.

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Only think of the long and extraordinary contest, that we carried on "for the salvation of Europe and the world;" and of the time that it takes "for capital "to find its way into new chan-"nels."

Sir N. I know nothing about that, but I know, that, since this Peel's Bill has been passed, I have got *no rents*.

Hum. Distrain, distrain!

Sir N. I have! And now I have got the rates, tithes and taxes to pay out of money that I borrow on mortgage; and thus my estate ——

Hum. Upon my honour, Sir Ninny, you look on the matter in a wrong light.

Sir N. Why look you here, Mr. Humbug; I am as loyal a man as any in the kingdom and have always supported his Majesty's government; but, I do think, that they should do something for us; that they should give us a good price by repealing this Peel's Bill.

Hum. But, my dear Sir Ninny, only think of the triumph that that would give to that "seditious and blasphemous" Cobbett!

Sir N. D—— the fellow! I don't like him any better than you do. I wish the devil had him. I wish he had rotted in Newgate, or had been drowned at sea. I'd think no more of hanging him than I would of hanging a poacher.

Hum. Well, then, my dear Sir Ninny, pray think of what a thing it would be to place before the whole nation, and I may say, the whole world, a fact to prove, that that fellow, being, too, in a sort of exile, into which the stern-path system had driven him, and sitting in his shirt and trowsers in a paper tent in Long Island, knew more about the greatest of all the affairs of this great nation than his Majesty's Government and both Houses of the Collective Wisdom of the ——

Sir N. Oh!.

Humbug. Nay; this is not all; for, with the reputation for knowledge and sagacity, which this triumph would give him, he would have thousands upon thousands flock to that standard of rebellion, which he calls *Reform*; the ——

Sir N. What! (*Starting up*)

Humbug. The torrent would become too strong to be resisted; a reform must take place; and —— need I say more?

Sir N. What! my borough! my *seat!*

Hum. God forbid, my dear Sir Ninny! God forbid I should live to see "the *education* of the country" compelled to give way to the "*basest populace*." God forbid I should live to see the "national *mind*," the "*wisdom* of parliament," the "*uncompromising spirit*," which has sustained the "*national faith*," and has "accomplished the salvation of the country, of Europe and the world," while it has placed the "credit of this *great nation* on an indisputable basis," and has "spread *happiness* and *content* throughout the dwellings of the immense population of this *mighty empire*;" God forbid, my dear Sir Ninny, that I should live to see "this stupend-"ous fabric of human wisdom; "this matchless constitution which "has conducted us in safety "through so many perils; this

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"envy of surrounding nations; "this admiration of the world;" God forbid, that I should live to see this "light of the universe," emanating, as it does, from the country-gentlemen of England, extinguished by "a *low, degraded crew* of reformers."

SIR N. Yes, Mr. Humbug, God forbid, indeed! 'Twould be a shocking thing: a very shocking thing; and so the Rev. Dr. FIRE-SHOVEL was saying last night to Lady Numpskull and myself. But, Mr. Humbug, don't you think that this Peel's Bill helps these same reformers by "*throwing*," as a noble Lord observed the other day, "the farmers into the *general mass of disaffection?*"

HUMBUG. Why, Sir Ninny, that noble Lord has singular ideas; and, as he objects to the farmers being *thrown* into the general mass of disaffection, it would be but civil in him to point out how they are to be *thrown* in any other direction.

Sir N. Gad I can tell you.

HUM. How?

SIR N. Why, give them *high prices again.*

HUM. This is not to be done, Sir Ninny, by any Act of the Legislature. It must be left to time; and, in time, "things will *find their level.*"

SIR N. Level, indeed, Sir! We shall all be *on a level* in the country pretty soon, I believe; for none of us will have any property left.

HUM. Pray, my dear Sir Ninny, have a little patience. The "*healing hand* of time" will ——

SIR N. We have been told that for these seven years.

HUM. But, "the *general working* of events" cannot fail to ——

SIR N. I do not think so, Mr. Humbug; and I am quite satisfied, that this Peel's Bill will be the ruin of us all. And Cobbett may be the Devil if you will; he has proved this to me at any rate.

HUM. What! Sir Ninny; do you read Cobbett? I hope not!

(*Enter Fire-Shovel and Lady Numpskull.*)

FIRE-SHOVEL. Amen! I hope not indeed.

LADY N. For shame, my dear!

FIRE-SHOVEL. Oh, fie! Fie upon you, Sir Ninny.

SIR N. Why, I saw a Number one day by accident.

LADY N. By *accident* indeed! I'm ashamed of you, my dear.

FIRE-SHOVEL. Shame, shame, Sir Ninny! Hazard your precious and immortal soul by reading that wretched and diabolical and damnable villain's "seditious and blasphemous" writings!

HUMBUG. (*aside.*) I leave him in good hands.—*Exit.*

LADY N. There! You see Mr. Humbug's *gone;* and I wanted to ask him for the place of distributor of stamps for my son.

FIRE-SHOVEL. (*aside*) Which may be just as good for *my son.* I'll follow him. *Exit.*

SIR N. You have asked him often enough already in vain.

LADY N. Yes; and so I may, as long as you read Cobbett.

We should certainly come to a quarrel, and, therefore, I put an end to the dialogue; and to this Letter at the same time, being well convinced, that, what I have here given in the way of supposition, is little, if any thing, short of the reality, in scores, if not hundreds of instances. I am quite satisfied, that, had it not been for

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the dread of exposure from me, and of my triumph, Peel's Bill would have been repealed during the last session of Parliament; and these, I am as well satisfied, are the *only obstacles* in the way of the repeal now.

In conclusion, let me quote a prophecy about the *fate* of this bill, in a letter to the Regent, written in Long Island on the 5th September 1819, published in London on the 30th October 1819, and now re-published. "Of all "the wild schemes that ever issued "from the heads of weak and ob- "stinate men, this (Peel's Bill) is "the wildest, this is the most "visionary; and the *fate* of it "will be something like this: "after having caused unspeakable "misery amongst the poorer "classes; after having crushed a "great part of the middle classes; "after having driven away to "foreign lands a considerable "portion of the real resources of "the country; after having brought "the nation to the eve of some "terrible convulsion: after all "this, it will be abandoned; and "never will an expectation of "seeing cash-payments again "exist in any mind except that of "a born idiot. This result can "be prevented only by a *previous* "*convulsion*."

There, Sir, that is what I said of this measure, while you, in England, were tossing up your caps and shouting triumph at having adopted it. Does not this prove, that I am as fit as you are to give the people of Norfolk advice? Does it not form some justification for Lord King and Mr. Bennet and Mr. Denison in bestowing that praise, which gave you so much offence, and which is as it ought to be, very grateful to me? But, it was not *this or that* part of my writings on these subjects: it was the *general tenour* of them, which showed, in few words this: that, if my principles had been adopted, and my advice followed, the country never would have known any thing of those calamities that have now been brought upon it, or any thing of those difficulties and dangers, at the sight of which the Government now stands aghast. You, Sir, and all belonging to you, have been, from first to last, supporters of that system, which I have been as constantly opposing. The fruits of that horrible system are now before us; and, is it not a little too much to hear *you*, at this time, representing *me* as a mischief-doer to the country? Only an ordinary degree of modesty would, one would have thought, be sufficient to repress the spirit of reproach in you, at any rate. Instead of preferring accusations against me, you ought to seek indulgence from me, and be happy if you obtain it. Sack-cloth and ashes now become those who have been the satellites of Pitt and his successors. They have *ruined their country*; but their habitual flippant audacity still characterises every word that drops from their lips. "*Disaffection*" indeed! Harping still upon this old despicable string. The Borough-Bank Stoppage Act; the Eight hundred millions of Debt; the Barracks and thundering Army; Peel's Bill: these are the things that work, that embarrass, that torment, the nation; these produce the distress in England and the starvation in Ireland. These, the works of the Pitt faction; these

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are "disaffection;" and the man who talks of any other disaffection, is that which I do not, in the present case, choose to describe.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient
And most humble Servant,
WM. COBBETT.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT.

(*From the Statesman, Thursday.*)

WE have often observed, that, in proportion to the smallness of the number of our "*Representatives*" present, the matter that transpires is important. Last night there was some talk which, on more accounts than one, we think of great interest; and shall, therefore, offer some remarks on it to our readers.—The topics were, *Parliamentary Reform; Mr. Ricardo's Doctrines; Repeal of Taxes;* and the famous *Pension funding Project.*

That of *Reform* was brought forward by Mr. JAMES, member for Carlisle, in presenting a petition from a body of the inhabitants of that city. Mr. JAMES insisted, as he truly might, that all the distresses of the country, all its calamities and dangers, arose from the want of a due representation of the people in that House. He declared his conviction, that it was necessary that the reform should extend to *Universal Suffrage*; and, this he placed on the best possible ground; namely, that "as every man was liable to be "called upon to *risk his life in* "*the defence of property*, it "was just that he should have a "right to vote in the appointment "of those who *framed laws affect-*"*ing property and life.*" They *laughed*, it seems, on the Treasury Benches, when Mr. JAMES made a declaration in favour of *Universal Suffrage!* They will not laugh by-and-by! They will not laugh, when there remain neither *rents* nor *tithes;* and, mind, to preserve *either* of these, there must be some measures of a *decided assignat* character, unless there be a reform of the Parliament, for, reduce *establishments much*, and reduce *debt at all*, they cannot without a *reform!* The landlords and parsons have, therefore, to choose out of these three: *Reform*; *Assignats;* or *loss of rents and tithes:* and we would defy the Devil himself, if he were Premier, to prevent *one of the three.* We would *recommend* the first; but, really, it is much more, now, the affair of the landlords and parsons than it is that of any body else.—We cannot quit this topic, without just noticing the *high authority*, that that greater spouter CANNING, quoted the other night against the breaking up of rotten boroughs. He made a monstrous show of it. He said he would not tell who the authority was till he stated the doctrine; and, after a long preparation of this sort, out it came: "no other; no less an authority," said he, "than JUNIUS himself."—What an empty; what a contemptible piece of bombast! To quote an anonymous scribbler; as corrupt a knave, perhaps, as ever sacked public money; a writer, who to be damned instantly only needed to have given his name; a hooker-together of antithesises; the writer of a long book without any one sound principle, except by accident; and without as much useful knowledge in the whole book as is equal in amount

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to what any ploughboy can give you respecting the best mode of killing rats and mice. A writer that never was praised by any man of sense except from mere fashion and from carelessness; a writer that owes his reputation to the sort of mystery that hangs about the book: a foundation for reputation just as good as that of the ghost of Cock-lane, and not one whit better. The matter of the book is bad; the style affected and every way vicious. There is nothing in the book that enlightens the mind or warms the heart. Strings of coolly framed sentences; and, which is a great vice with us, antithesises without end; and in general, without point. This book has been praised by that *quoterie* of men calling themselves the *learned;* men who solemnly decided that the writings of WILLIAM IRELAND could have come from no other pen than that of SHAKESPEARE. A book, in short, containing nothing but impertinent malignity; and praised by nobody but solemn fools. And this is the *great authority* that our nabob in the shell holds up to us as a sufficient answer to the petitions of millions of the people! We are not, I take it, to be answered in this way; and if Mr. CANNING does not discover this before he gets to India, he will very soon afterwards.

Mr. RICARDO's *doctrines.*—Mr. JAMES took occasion to observe, that these doctrines had proved to be wholly false; and he said,* if Mr. RICARDO would but read a *little pamphlet or two* of Mr. COBBETT, he would find, that *he knew nothing at all of the matter;* and,

* MR. JAMES presented a petition from the merchants, traders, manufacturers, and other inhabitants of the city of Carlisle, complaining of the great pressure of distress arising from the immense weight of taxation. This they attributed in an eminent degree to the defective state of the representation in that house, and in this feeling he fully concurred with his constituents. The petitioners believed that a vast majority of that House were returned by far less than the thousandth part of the male adult population of the kingdom. Under such circumstances, there could be no community of thought, no sympathy, no kindred feeling, between the great bulk of the people and those who sat in that house to represent them. The people saw that the grossest acts of tyranny and injustice had arisen from this defective system. They saw the act of 1819 for preventing meetings of the people—that in the same year the perpetrators of a barbarous outrage on the people assembled at Manchester had been suffered to escape with impunity, and that question to pass without investigation. His constituents, as he had observed, attributed a great portion of their burdens to the excessive pressure of taxation, and in this he fully concurred with them. Some of the evils were also to be set down to the account of the recent alteration in the currency. His honourable friend the member for Portarlington (Mr. Ricardo), in speaking on this subject, had said that the change in the currency had made a reduction in prices to the amount of ten per cent.; and on another occasion he had observed that there was not a difference of 3 per cent. between gold and paper. Now these were opinions inconsistent with each other, as they were, in his opinion, all inconsistent with the fact. If the Hon. Member (Mr. Ricardo) would but *take the trouble of reading two or three small works written by Mr. Cobbett on this subject* (laughter), and which he might *obtain at a very*

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he added, as an inducement for MR. RICARDO to enter on this course of instruction, that the pamphlets were *extraordinarily cheap*. The Honourable Collective Wisdom appear to have *laughed* very heartily at this; a laugh not altogether unequivocal. Some we are sure laughed at "*the Oracle*"; but the greater part, perhaps, were in the mood of *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, in the Critic, when he joins in the horse-laugh, but shows, all the while, that he is most cursedly mortified. Referring our readers to the Speech of MR. JAMES, we will now take notice of what MR. RICARDO appears to have said in his *defence*. MR. JAMES had said that MR. RICARDO had at one time asserted that PEEL'S Bill would have the effect of reducing prices only *three* per cent. and that since he had acknowledged that it had reduced prices *ten* per cent. The defendant did not *deny*; nor did he attempt to say that MR. COBBETT had not refuted all his doctrines. But he appears simply to have said—"I ask the Hon. "Gentleman *when* it was that I "talked of this three and this ten "per cent.!" Now, let us observe that this was by no means that species of defence which we should have expected from an oracle. Oracles are famous for being bold; and, never attempt (that we have heard of) the Quaker-like tactics of answering one question by another. MR. JAMES does not, doubtless, carry the Parliamentary debates about in his pocket; and might very well have replied to MR. RICARDO by asking him what he would think of a lady, who, in answer to a

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cheap rate (continued laughter), they would convince him *that he knew nothing at all about the matter*. (Loud and continued laughter from all sides.) The Hon. Member (Mr. Ricardo) had also said, that the prices depended on the supply and demand; but if he had read Cobbett (laughter), he would have found that the prices also depended upon the quantity of the circulating medium in the market (hear, hear); and that when the circulation was much limited, the result would be to double the weight of taxation. Well, but could this alteration in the currency be repealed? He feared not. It appeared that branch banks were to be established in the country, for the purpose of issuing country notes. This was trifling; for if convertible into Bank of England notes, and those notes into gold, the thing would be of no avail. The noble lord opposite (Lord Londonderry) would find himself very much mistaken, if he thought that he could remedy the misgovernment of half a century, by turning bonded wheat into flour, and issuing pawnbrokers' tickets to bankrupts and beggars. As to relief from the salt-tax, it alone would be nothing; *for he was convinced that no reduction short of* 30,000,000*l.* *or* 25,000,000*l.* *of taxes at least, would be effectual for the relief of the country.* (Laughter.) He was glad in this opinion to have the concurrence of the Honourable Member for Reading (Mr. Monck). The honourable gentleman then proceeded to state, that nothing but entire and effectual reform could produce immediate good to the country, or be any security for its better government in future. The reform which he should wish to see accomplished would be that which would give a vote to every member in society. He was, in short, for *universal suffrage*. It was his conscientious opinion that every man should have a vote, as every man was *alike liable to be called upon in defence of his country*.

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charge of a nature too indelicate to be named when we have any so pure as the Honourable House before us, what he would think of the lady, who, in her defence should say, "Tell me the hour and the spot!" What, in such a case as this would it be to the party accusing, whether the fragrant clover or the nodding corn had been the sufferer? And what is it to this humbugged nation whether the oracle uttered its gusts on the Monday or the Friday; whether it held the Saturday or the Sunday sacred, whereon to cease from its labours? What is it to this deluded nation whether these erroneous doctrines were uttered six weeks sooner or six weeks later? We have not the precise dates before us at this moment; but we venture to state (and we will give the detail to-morrow) that Mr. RICARDO has asserted, that PEEL's Bill could not raise the value of money compared with that of produce more than, in the first place 5 or 6 per cent.; in the next place 4½ per cent.; at one time (but we forget precisely the order) not more than 3 per cent., and, lastly, not more than 10 per cent. To ask Mr. JAMES questions, therefore, as to the *when*, was giving him no answer at all. The charge of that gentleman was perfectly well founded; nor was it by any means uncalled for; because, upon these very doctrines of Mr. RICARDO, this terrible Bill of PEEL was founded; and upon these very doctrines it is, that it is now contended, *the taking off of taxes will not relieve the distresses of the country.* It was necessary therefore, for Mr. JAMES, if he meant to speak sense, and to cause sense to prevail amongst others, to attack these delusive and humbugging doctrines; proceeding, as Mr. JAMES truly observed, from Mr. RICARDO's *complete ignorance of the whole matter.* To *prove* this complete ignorance, there were not two or three of Mr. COBBETT's pamphlets necessary. It did not need the "*Long Island Prophecies*;" nor did it need any thing but the first of the three letters which were addressed to Lord LIVERPOOL a few weeks ago; which were first published in this Paper, and afterwards published in the *Register* of 9th March. In that letter it was proved to the satisfaction of every man of sense, not that Mr. RICARDO's doctrines were false in degree; not that that gentleman had fallen into an error of calculation or computation; not that there was an error in the *figures*; but that there was an error in the mind; and that the basis of the opinion was a perfect vision; a thing having no more to do with the matter than the crows that make their nests in the elm-trees at the foot of the monument have to do with the supporting of that monument. This is what that letter shows. As Mr. JAMES said, it is very cheap. It costs only sixpence; and if a man will be a fool all his life rather than expend what a Jew-boy gains by the sale of eighteen-penny-worth of oranges, he merits to be laughed at, to be sure; only, it is pretty serious work when his folly is to cause the ruin and the starvation of no inconsiderable part of the people of a great country.

REDUCING TAXES.——There seems to be a great strife between

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the leather-tax and the salt-tax, which (or one of which) will doubtless be taken off in consequence of the *funding* of the pensions and half-pay. Whatever tax be taken off, it ought to be *wholly* taken off; for if any part remain, all the taxgatherers remain; and all the frauds, perjuries, rascalities, and expenses of the tax still remain. It is more advantageous to a country to take off the whole of a tax to the amount of a million, than a part of a tax to the amount of a million and a half. In selecting taxes to be taken off, the most expensive in the collection; the most odious in themselves; the most teasing and tantalising; the most degrading and insulting should be fixed on. There is quite enough of all these qualities belonging to the salt-tax; but, besides this, it has two characteristics, which render it peculiarly detestable. The first of these is, that it is of the nature of a *poll-tax*. Salt, is perfectly a necessary of life.—It is not like beer, wine, spirits, tobacco, pepper, almost any thing else that is taxed. It is not even like soap and candles. Means may be found to do with a very small portion of these. But we must have salt; and the labourer must have as much of it as the Lord. It is, as we said before, of the nature of a poll-tax, and, where was there a poll-tax ever heard of in the world without exciting feelings hostile to the Government?—The other peculiarity of the salt-tax is, that it intercepts a real gift of God. It is a thing not created by the labour of man. It is a pure gift of nature. The various uses of Salt in Agriculture are very well known. In America they salt their hay as they put it in the stack. They give their horses, sheep and cattle of all descriptions salt; and they make use of it in the creating of manure; though they have first carried it across the sea, and that, too, from this very island; whose government interposes between God and the people here, and whose unwise laws do, in fact, say to the people, "For the sake "of our getting a million and a "half from you we will do you "an injury to the amount of many "millions." We know very well that it is said, and we know the fact to be so, indeed, that the Government, in order to obviate this injury, will permit salt to be used, tax free, for certain purposes of agricultural manufacture. But, look at all the endless vexations necessary to be endured by individuals in order to avail themselves of this exception! In short, and this the Government knows very well, these exceptions, though undoubtedly well meant, operate in favour of, and are made use of by, none but great manufacturers; and that many of them make use of it for the villanous purpose of robbing the rest of the community, by the means of the bribery and other artifices that they employ. It is perfectly unbearable; the very thought is enough to drive people to madness, that we should be obliged to pay *twenty shillings* for a certain parcel of that very matter which nature casts upon our own shores, and that that same parcel of matter, shall be first bought here, put on board of ship, carried to America, and sold out of the shop there for *less than half-a-*

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crown! It was the salt-tax that, more than any other thing, produced the French revolution. The recollection of it produced more bitterness, and more vindictive acts than any other of the oppressions of the French people. It is a thing that touches every creature. It is galling beyond description, and if the Government have one grain of sense left, they will cast the accursed thing from them, and have one claim, at least, to the thanks of the country. But if they take any, let them take off the whole of the tax; to take off a part, leaves all the odiousness of the tax, and, in fact, only tends to increase the irritation.

FUNDING OF PENSIONS AND HALF-PAY.—We explained this thing very fully yesterday. And should not have mentioned it now, had not Mr. BROUGHAM made what we deem a little too free with our property. We have a particular regard for the "rights of property," notwithstanding Mr. WODEHOUSE has chosen to assert the contrary of us. We mean, upon this occasion, to claim *our own*. We shall first give Mr. BROUGHAM'S speech as we find it reported; and when we have done that, we shall put it to the candour of our readers, whether the learned gentleman have, or have not, made a little too free with our property upon this occasion.

"Mr. BROUGHAM entirely concurred in that suggestion, and begged to ask the Right Hon. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he would extend his plan to the *whole of the national debt?*—(Hear, hear.)—Having taken one leaf out of the right honourable gentleman's book, the country could not do better than take another. And now it occurred to him, there were many expenses of the Government to which so admirable a system might clearly be made applicable. There *was the civil list*—(Hear, hear); the *pension list*—(Hear, hear); those *charges were annuities dependent upon lives*. What could be better than to *farm the pensioners off at once?*—(Hear, and laughter).—Nay, *ministers themselves might be provided for upon the same principle*—(Hear, hear).—Their tenure of place was almost equal to tenure for life.—(Laughter).—Whatever might be the goodness of their holding, it seemed at least tolerably secure; and he (Mr. Brougham) doubted not to find *contractors for the ministers* as well as for the *half-pay officers*.—(Hear and laughter.)—He really was bound to press the measure upon the consideration of the right hon. gentleman; a discovery so important ought not to be neglected. Nor were the powers of the measure confined even to the *salaries of ministers*; for the *whole royal family might be farmed out* in the same way, to the relief of the present generation (which much wanted such relief), and at the expense of a trifling burden *only upon our happy posterity*.—(Cheers and laughter.)"

Thus far Mr. BROUGHAM. Our readers will, we are sure, excuse us for producing proof that this property belongs to ourselves; and, to produce such proof, we have only to insert here a passage from our parliamentary commentary of yesterday.

"The measure is this: to *fund* the *pensions* and the *half-pay!* To get people to contract to pay them. To make *them over* to the contractors. To put them out on *farm*, as they do the poor of some parishes. In short, it is a *loan* that the Collective is about to make, to get money to pay the pensions and the half-pay with. This is the fact stark-naked: and there is no doubt of the plan

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being carried into effect; for, it will cause some taxes to be taken off.—Suppose here to be an officer who has half-pay of 100*l.* a-year. It is for his life. The Government *contracts with me*, suppose, to pay this officer; and it pays me, not the 100*l.* a-year at first, but *less*; and, in time, it pays me more than 100*l.* a-year. So that, in the end I get by it; but, then, the Government has *less to pay for the present*; this is what CASTLEREAGH calls *dividing* the burdens with *posterity!* Posterity will not, we hope and believe, be fools enough to bear any portion of it. However, the thing is a loan; and the certificates for the officers and soldiers pay and pensions are the scrip! What next! What devil's tricks has the borough-system yet to play? Upon exactly the same ground the *King's allowance*, that of *his family*, *all the pensions* and *sinecures*, the *placemen* and *judges salaries* may be *funded*. PAINE said, that he should not wonder if PITT were, at last, to "*fund* the *Bank notes*," and issue other paper as evidence of the Debt. There is no knowing, as we have often said, what shape the thing will assume at last. We have only to look at the history of the South Sea Bubble to be convinced that the powers of humbug are infinite. We should not at all wonder to see the *tithes funded!* Don't start parsons. Many things much more unlikely have taken place. A seizure of some sort or other must happen somewhere. To fund the tithes would be a great deal more natural thing than to fund the half-pay and pensions of officers and soldiers. A large sum of money advanced upon the tithes would "divide the burthen with posterity," indeed. However, these hints will be sufficient. Our readers will see what a rich vein our noble political philosopher has struck upon here. This new funding-system may be carried to lengths of which few men are yet aware."

We by no means find fault with Mr. BROUGHAM for availing himself of what he found here. There only wanted just a hint that he was indebted for it to an *Evening paper of that day*. There wanted no distinct acknowledgments, no expressions of gratitude, no praises, for fear Mr. WODEHOUSE should be at him; but just a hint that the thought had struck somebody before. The thought did not strike Mr. BROUGHAM when he was answering Lord CASTLEREAGH who broached the project; and, therefore, we say, in the most unqualified manner, that he owed the thought entirely to us, and that it was due to us, strictly speaking, that he should mention our paper by *name*, seeing that his speech was so very literal a copy of it. Perhaps, however, he thought that the House, the tasteful, the all-accomplished House, the at-once profound and sprightly House, to endeavour to bring which into contempt is to be punished with banishment for life; perhaps he thought that a body of persons of such elegant taste would not have been so entertained, and would not have bestowed on his wit so much cheering and so much laughter, if it had discovered, like the audience of the Spanish mountebank, mentioned in Gil Blas, that the squeak came from the knee of the cloak and did not originate with the operator himself.—We said yesterday that this new funding project would be received with great approbation; and, in a few hours after we wrote the words, the opinion was made good; for, whatever might be said about the ridiculousness of the thing (and a good deal was said;) whatever exposure might take

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place as to the humbug of borrowing money to pay pensions and half-pay, in order to keep sacred the Sinking Fund; whatever might be said about this, and extremely well exposed it was by Mr. MABERLY; still all agreed to the project; seeing that the object was, in the humbug language of the day, *to throw the burden forward upon posterity*. God Almighty only knows what we are to see take place before this thing be over; but, at any rate, the main part of the weight will soon settle itself down safe upon the shoulders of the landlords and the parsons, and we will endeavour, if Mr. BROUGHAM will but promise to lend us his assistance, to keep the rest of the community in a fit of laughter from one end of a Session of Parliament to the other. Like pigeons, which the Yankees catch with large nets, these projects, the first having come down to us, will come tumbling one after another, till we shall find ourselves at last up to head and ears, and fairly smothered by the the subject of our sport. Readers! remember, that we now give it as our decided opinion, that the Ministers will at last propose, to *fund the funds!* We desire this prediction to be remembered; and if Mr. WODEHOUSE cannot see how the funds can be funded, we can.

THE BUBBLE.

AT a Meeting of the Proprietors of Bank Stock, held May 2d, the substance of the late negociation between the Bank and the Ministers came. The proposition of the Ministers had been, to extend the Charter of the Bank ten years *beyond the year* 1833, on condition that the Bank would give up *directly* that part of its charter which *prevents the establishment of other Banking Companies in England and Wales with more than six partners.* This was submitted to the present Meeting, by the Directors; and the Proprietors agreed to it. But, besides this, it was stated by the Directors, that the Bank was to have authority *to issue again* the ONE POUND NOTES, as before the passing of Peel's Bill! This clearly shows what are the *ultimate intentions* of both Bank and Ministry.

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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TO

LORD CASTLEREAGH,

On the insolence of the Borough-mongers in the Day of their triumph. On the New Bank Note Project.

"I repeat, that, unless we can make "*France pay a share of the interest of our* "*Debt*, contracted in the hiring of "Germans and Russians to enslave "her, we shall, with all our *successes* "and all our *boastings*, have only *ac-* "*celerated the destruction of our own system.* "In short, unless we make France "tributary to us to the amount of "20 millions sterling a-year, we *shall* "*live to mourn the triumphs at which we* "*now rejoice.*"—REGISTER, 1 July 1815.

Kensington, 8 May 1822.

MY LORD,

I do not recollect that I have addressed any Letter directly to you since the time when the Collective Wisdom was receiving you with the *clapping of hands* on your return from that memorable enterprise, the re-instalment of the Bourbons. That was the moment of the height of the glory of the THING. From that moment to this it has been on the *decline*. It is my intention now to have a little sport with you on the subject of the new paper-bubble project that you have on foot; and on that of the Festival that will unquestionably be one of the immediate consequences of its being put into execution.

But, before I enter on these, I must and will look back for a few minutes to the insolence of the Boroughmongers towards us at the time when Napoleon fell. I addressed a letter to you upon that occasion, which began in a manner that I like to remind you of. The base insolence of the bloody borough-crew at that time surpassed any thing of the sort that was, perhaps, ever witnessed in the world. They looked at us, as if they would willingly, if they could have spared the time, have ordered the great body of the people to be torn up and eaten by dogs or bears or wolves. The base and insolent monsters did not triumph over *the French* half so much as they did over *us*. Every look of the ruffians seemed

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to say: "*Now* we shall see you "massacred for ever! Now you "are as safe as if you were in "the hands of Satan! Now your "doom is *sealed*." I never shall forget the monsters; and particularly that branch of them most famed for *hypocrisy*, arrogance and cruelty. These became, at the time I am alluding to, perfect devils incarnate. They fairly gnashed their teeth at us; and would, I am certain, if they had met with resistance, have actually bitten us and sucked our blood. But, above all things it is the devil-like *sneers* of this basest of tribes that I recollect so well!

I, however, never flinched before them; nor did *I hold my tongue*; but, even in those *worst of times*; those worst of times ever known by any nation, I addressed you in these words, just after the battle of Waterloo.—"*Overthrow of Napoleon.* My Lord, the intelligence of this grand event reached me on Saturday last, and in the following manner. I had been out very early in the morning, and, in returning home to breakfast, I met a populous *gang of gypsies.* At the first view of them, I thought of nothing but the robberies which they constantly commit upon us, and I began to plan my measures of defence; but, upon a nearer approach to them, I perceived the whole caravan decorated with *laurel.* The blackguard ruffians of men had *laurel* boughs in their hats; the nasty ferocious looking women, with pipes in their jaws, and straddling along like German trulls, had *laurel* leaves pinned against their sides. The poor asses, that went bending along beneath the burdens laid on them by their merciless masters, and that were quivering their skins to get the swarm of flies from those parts of their bodies which the wretched drivers had beaten raw, had their bridles and halters and pads stuck over with *laurel.* Somewhat staggered by this symbol of victory, I, hesitating what to do, passed the gang in silence, until I met an extraordinary ill-looking fellow, who, with two half-starved dogs, performed the office of rear-guard. I asked him the meaning of the laurel boughs, and he informed me, that they were hoisted on account of the "*glorious vic-*"*tory* obtained by the *Duke of* "*Wellington over Bony;*" that they were furnished them by a *good gentleman, in a black coat and bay white wig*, whose house they had passed the day before, between Andover and Botley, and who had given them *several*

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pots of ale, wherein to drink the Duke's health. — "And, to be sure," added he, "it is glorious "news, and we may now hope to "see the gallon loaf at a *groate* "again, as 'twas in my old father's "time."

This I *began*; and now, pray see how I *ended* that Letter. That infamous newspaper, the TIMES, had marked out some hundreds of the French republicans *for the gallows*, and had recommended, that we should *compel* the Bourbon to *hang* them. It had also urged the necessity of compelling the Bourbon to do various other monstrous things; on which I spoke, in my Letter, which concluded thus: "There will be some *work* to accomplish all this; yet all this would not answer *the end in view*, unless the French pay a share of our NATIONAL DEBT, the *annual interest* of which will now be forty-three millions sterling; and, unless we could, besides, make them pay their share towards the support of our PAUPERS. Unless these can be accomplished, people will not live *here* to pay part of this debt, if they can avoid it by going to France. Their *loyalty* will not keep them at home to live meanly, while they can live in affluence by only crossing the channel. If France were a republic, less rich people would go, than will go, France being a monarchy. Our old malady will return with the Bourbons, to restore whom we have so loaded ourselves with debts, that many of our people will be compelled to go and live under them.—All is not over, therefore, when Louis is up again. By disabling France for war, we shall compel her to set about the arts of peace. We shall make France *a country to live in*; a country that the arts of peace will seek. She will, do what we will, soon become our rival in manufactures. Commerce will revive with her very quickly. Amongst all the *fighting nations* she is, after all, the only one that is *lightly taxed*; and, I repeat, that, unless we can make *her pay a share of the interest of the Debt*, contracted to hire Germans and Russians to enslave her, we shall, with all our *successes* and all our *boastings*, have only accelerated *the destruction of our own system*. In short, unless we can make France *tributary* to us, to the amount of 20 millions sterling a year, *we shall live to mourn the triumphs, at which we now rejoice.*"

Well, now, my Lord, what do

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you think of *that?* I dare say you never *read* this before. Oh, no! You were too great a man: you had the fate of the world upon *your mighty shoulders!* This nation will suffer; it has indeed; but it will suffer a great deal more yet; and suffer it ought, for your elevation, for the power it has permitted you, and men like you, to possess. It is in a fair way of receiving ample justice; particularly the Borough-mongering class, who were so insolent, so lost in insolence, at the time I am referring to. *Rents! Capital! Distress!* Oh, God, how can'st even thou inflict punishment more than adequate to the baseness of those, who licked the hand of "*Old Blucher*" of Borough-Bank-note war notoriety!

The above passages are from the Register of 1st July, 1815. On the 29th of the same month I addressed you again on the exultations of Corruption. "At present I have to speak to your Lordship upon the subject of the expectations, excited here by this event. The Courier says: "*The play is over; let us go to supper.*" And this is the general opinion. When men have long been intent upon one single object; when they have long bent their minds to one sole wish, they are always disappointed in their expectations, because they have not given themselves time to think of the consequences to be produced by the means which they make use of to obtain the accomplishment of that wish. Thus will it be with *John Bull* who has been made to believe, that, if Napoleon could be gotten rid of, England would be freed from all the calamities which she feels; that she would once more come back to her former state; and that the visits of the taxing people would cease to be as frequent as those of the apothecary. Napoleon is actually our prisoner, but *still the taxing people come.*—"*The play*" may be over; but, oh! no! we cannot "*go to supper.*" We have something to do. We have *forty-five millions a-year for ever to pay for the play.* This is no pleasant thing. But indeed the play is *not* over. The *first act* is, perhaps, closed. But, *that grand revolution*, that bright star, which burst forth in the year 1789, is still sending forth its light all over the world. In that year, feudal and ecclesiastical tyranny, ignorance and superstition received the first heavy blow: they have since received others; and in spite of all that can be now done in their favour, they are

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destined to perish.—The farmers hope, that you will do something to *prevent abundant harvests in France;* the tradesmen, that you will make things *as dear as they are in England*, to prevent their customers from *emigrating;* and there is another class, who, I dare say, are full as anxious, that you should *re-establish tithes.* How disappointed they will be! How short-lived will be their triumph! How they will stare at one another; how mutually insipid will be their talk, when they find, that the only real solid effect produced by this brilliant achievement will be *an addition to their taxes!*"

Why, my Lord, had it not been for this prospective view of things, I should have *died.* I never could have endured the insolence of those days, had I not foreseen, that the *present days* would come. It is quite necessary that I *now* remind you of what I said in those days of ferocious Boroughmongering triumph. All that was called "*Opposition*" was silenced. The far greater part of even *good* and *true* men thought it prudent to hold their tongues. Many and many a score left off (after long reading) to read what I wrote. They began to *doubt.* They feared I was wrong. They yielded to the torrent. Many, however, still *held firm.* What can describe the satisfaction that these *now* enjoy? "What! enjoy satisfaction at the distresses of their *country?*" Oh, no! But, at the distresses of those, who were ready to *bite* us in 1814 and 1815; and whose distresses must be great *indeed*, before the *country* can be *relieved!*

The great cause of all that now creates what is called distress, and which must lead to something or other full of *great danger;* the great cause has been, and is, a a want of a reform of the House of Commons. This has been the cause of *undertaking* useless and wicked wars, and also the cause of making them *long and wasteful.* But, it has also been the cause of unparalleled *ignorance* in conducting the nation's affairs; and of this ignorance how complete is the proof! When we blame men for not having done a thing, or for having done a thing, it is, in order to establish the justice of our charge, not sufficient for us to show that the result of their conduct has been mischievous: we must also show, that they had it in their power to act otherwise; and, if to this showing we add the proof, that some other man recommended them to act otherwise,

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then the ground of our blame is complete.

Have not I, then, a right, a clear and indisputable right, to blame you and your colleagues for whatever calamities the nation, Ireland as well as England has now to endure? For sixteen, nay, for twenty, years, have you not been warned by *me* of all the evils and all the dangers that you have now brought upon the country? Have you, then, any excuse to plead? Others have warned you too; but, others have grown *weary*. I have stuck to you from first to last: and, there is this peculiar circumstance belonging to me, that I was the person pointed out by yourself, by you in particular, as having the ambition to *aspire to office without being qualified for it!* An impudent and false and vulgar accusation as far as related to the first part of it, and vulgar and silly as far as related to the last part of it. But, if I were *unqualified* for the managing of such matters, what the Devil are *you!*

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread;" and, I do assure you, that, though endowed with great capacity for labour, and though thinking that I well understand most of the interests of the nation, I should be by no means tranquil under the thought of having any one of its great interests committed to my management. I should be full of doubts and fears as to the adequacy of my capacity. But, if this is the case with *me*, with what doubts and fears ought not *you* to be harassed? And, yet, you appear never to feel either the one or the other! You go on as boldly and as glibly as if we were all put to school to you.

However, this nation has now found out what it is to be under the dominion of bare brass, "brass and nothing else." In the schemes, the ridiculous and monstrous schemes, which I have by-and-by to notice, this nation has the practical illustration of the effect of being under the guidance of this brazen and flippant system of sway.

At the time, to which I have just referred, it became a duty which I thought I owed my country to show clearly the causes, which were then *beginning* to produce those consequences that now appear so hideous. It is, at this time, of great importance that I establish, beyond all dispute, the fact, that the *doctrine of currency*, as relating to our present case, was well understood by me and well laid before you, from the very

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outset. It is my desire; that is to say, if I can do it without becoming a debauched wretch, watching by night and sleeping by day, to which nothing shall ever make me submit if I can avoid it; it is my desire, if I can do it without such an enormous sacrifice as this, to assist in *pointing out what ought to be done*, which I never will do in my present capacity. If all goes to wreck, I have nothing to answer for; yet, I cannot help wishing, that all should not go to wreck. Therefore it is necessary, that I now *remind* the country of what I said *at the very outset* of the evils which have, at last, arrived at such a fearful magnitude.

Let us take, then, the following, addressed to Mr. Vansittart on the 30th of October, 1815. There is nothing that can be said *now* more complete, as to all the main points, than what was said then. It would really appear, that the great body of the nation has now resolved to *echo* my opinions of 1815. Well, then; what a shame is this for *you?* How are you to answer to your king and country the having set these opinions at defiance? And, on what *ground* is it, that you now talk of the measures and opinions of you, and the like of you, emanating from the "*education* of the country," while the mass of a county-meeting are called "*a populace?*" I insert the following, however, not only as a proof of your obstinate perseverance in error, in spite of remonstrance, but also as serving to illustrate the nature of the measures, on which I shall afterwards have to remark, and which you are now bringing forward as *remedies*. You, I dare say, never read in 1815. You were then *too great a man;* but, your present state is somewhat different; and, therefore, you may, perhaps, now condescend to read. You have found, at last, that those who used to obey your *nod*, are not disposed to listen even to your *prayers*. You may, then, now have your ears open at any rate; and, if you have not, the public have theirs open.——"*Something must be done.*—This phrase is in the mouth of every man of every class in the country, which feels itself, at the end of this long pursuit of glory and of happiness, in a state somewhat like the citizen, who, after having passed forty years amidst smoke and noise and stench, in order to amass the means of living easily and tranquilly and happily for the remainder of his days, mopes about in his

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country box like a fish out of water; or, like a new married man, who has been for months up to head and ears in love, and who, at the end of about four or eight days, according to circumstances, begins to wonder what ails him. A Frenchman told me once, in Philadelphia, that in about a week after he was married, he was seized with the idea, that he was not the same identical person that he was before, and that he looked in the glass and felt his arms and legs (" *Je me touchoit*," were his words) to ascertain the fact. In the course of a few weeks, however, he found that he really was the same man as before, with a suitable dimunition of spirits, or, of what is vulgarly called *pluck*.—Such, or thereabouts, is the present state of feeling in this country. Every one is disappointed. Every one, however ignorant, begins to perceive, that this career of war and this harvest of glory, have not yielded happiness. People do not know *how* it is; but, they know, that they are *all in distress*. They see that we have reduced the French nation to submission to the Bourbons; they see that we have imprisoned Napoleon for life; they hear of the intended Waterloo column; they see that the Church and all our venerable establishments have been preserved unto us; they see hundreds of English and Hanoverian Knights created; they see *peace* and even *plenty*; and yet they are miserable. Agriculture languishes; trade follows agriculture; nobody has money to pay rent, taxes, or debts.—A *corn bill* has not *protected* the farmer. The cheapness of food has not lessened the misery of the poor. Nothing sells. The nation perishes in the midst of spending the produce of successive abundant harvest.—This state of things draws from every one the phrase at the head of this letter. The Banker, when he sees himself compelled to refuse his usual discounts, tells his applicant, that " *something* " *must be done*." The Farmer (formerly so gay on his yeomanry cavalry horse, and so steady to hack the Jacobins), when he is offered 17 shillings instead of 37 shillings a-head for his South Down Ewes, squeezes out his thick lips, swells his nostrils, throws his jolter head on one side, with a nod, and exclaims, " By —— zummert must be done." The landlord, who has vociferated for war, taxation, sedition and treason bills for two-and-twenty long years, when his steward, instead

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of ten thousand, brings him five hundred pounds in money and half a hundred notices to quit, observes, with one of Lord Burleigh's shakes of the head:—"Really, Mr. Trusty, govern-"ment must do *something*. Par-"liament meets in February. I "do not know what the Chan-"cellor of the Exchequer means "to propose, though I am very "intimate with him; but *some-"thing must be done.*" The tradesman, who has, for months past, used the door-knocker much more than his hammer or scissars, when, for the twentieth time, he is told *to call again*, goes muttering away, that "*something must be done.*" In short, all agree, that it is impossible to go on long in our present course. The parson, the lawyer, the doctor, the very lowest of labourers say that a change of *some sort must* take place. The "*loyal*," as they call themselves, observe, very seriously, that Parliament must do *something;* and, the Jacobins, as they are called, with more of curiosity than sorrow on their countenance, say, "*now* let us see *what* will be done."—All persons, of every class, are now Sir, looking to *you*. Some think, that you can conjure money into their pockets; others that you can pay the soldiers, sailors, judges, placemen, pensioners, and the Royal family somehow or other without money. The farmers generally most firmly believe, that you raise the price of their produce, for which you would have their blessings and the curses of the rest of the country, especially the army, the navy, and the annuitants. What you will do it is hard for me to say; or, rather, *what way*, you will go to work; for, in substance, I know, that you *must* do, in the course of about two or three years, one of three things. You must diminish the interest of the debt; you must cause large additional quantities of paper-money to be issued, so as to bring the guineas back again to be worth 28*s.* or 30*s.*; or you must suffer the whole of the paper system to go to atoms.—The people do not perceive the real cause of their distress. The farmer sees his wheat fall from 15*s.* to 7*s.* a-bushel. He ascribes it to the defeat of Napoleon, and says that *he* was the *best friend of the farmers.* Others think, that things will *come about.* Others damn the French, and say, that it is their produce that lowers ours in price. Others curse the parsons, and say that it is the tithes which we pay, and which the French do not pay,

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which is the cause of our ruin; and a hungry man in Wiltshire of the name of *Benett* has actually written and published a long pamphlet to show, that the parsons have no right to what they receive. Nobody sees, or, at least, appears to see, that their distress arises from *the debt and the military establishment and other fixed expenses, entailed on us by the war;* and from the attempt which is now making to bring us upon a *par of exchange with other countries, by diminishing the quantity of our paper money.*—I contended, with Mr. Huskisson, that wheat must continue to be, on an average, about 15*s.* a bushel, or that the taxes could not be paid in sufficient amount to meet interest on the debt, and to pay the other expenses of the year. You are now trying the experiment of disproving that position; but, I shall soon see you, I think, compelled to give it the most complete sanction. Again, the Bullion Committee formally declared, that, by *drawing in the paper judiciously*, the Bank might be able to pay in gold and silver in two years. I contended, that this was impossible, *as long as the interest of the debt continued to be paid;* for, that, if the quantity of paper were to be so *diminished* as to bring the pound note to be worth 20*s.* in gold, *the people who pay the taxes to support the funds must all be ruined;* and this ruin is now actually taking place in consequence of *an attempt to raise the value of the paper.* The Bank, in endeavouring to follow the advice, *and to act upon the principles, of the Bullion Committee*, has plunged agriculture and trade and rents and debts and credits all into confusion. And was not this a consequence for any man of common sense to foresee? If his head were not clear enough to conceive the idea, was it not so plainly marked out for him in my "*Paper against Gold*" as to be palpable to one almost an ideot? Was it not as plain as your nose is upon your face, that the land (from which all ability to pay taxes proceeds) could never pay interest in paper worth 20*s.* in the pound, for money which had been borrowed for it, and salaries (including pay of soldiers and sailors) which had taken place, in a paper worth 12*s.* or 15*s.* in the pound? When wheat was 15*s.* a bushel, the land was able to pay; but, if wheat be, by a diminution of the quantity of paper, made worth only 7*s.* a bushel, can it still be able to pay? The Corn Bill is, as

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I always said it would be, wholly unavailing. But, what a monstrous absurdity, to deal out a Corn Bill, with one hand, in order to *protect* the farmer; and, with the other hand, to mow him down by a diminution of the paper-money.—To make this matter plain to you, Sir, if it be not so already, let us suppose the interest of the Debt and the other expenses to be paid *in wheat* instead of money; and, that farmer Gripum is assessed at 500 bushels of wheat, leaving him 200 for his landlord and 300 for other purposes, and that he never grows any thing but wheat. All of a sudden the government comes and demands 1,000 bushels, instead of 500. It is clear, that the landlord goes without his rent, and that Gripum must be instantly ruined, if he has no extraneous fund to resort to; and, this can be the case in comparatively few instances. Well, now, how does this differ from the paper operation? In consequence of the great quantity of paper-money, Gripum can pay his share of the interest of the Debt and of the expenses of Army, Royal family, &c. &c. by selling 500 bushels of his wheat; but, the Government, or the Bank, or both, or the *Thing* that sways it, call it by what name you will, diminishes the quantity of paper so as to compel poor Gripum, whose helmet shone so bright against the Jacobins and Levellers, to sell the whole of the 1,000 bushels to pay his share of the interest of the Debt and of the Expenses incurred by the Anti-jacobin war. Now, where is the *difference* in the two cases?—I have, you will say, supposed an extreme case. I have supposed Gripum to be wholly swallowed up at once, helmet, uniform, horse and all; but, if these extreme cases have not very frequently occurred, the effect is only different *in degree;* and because the farmers are not *all completely smashed at one blow*, you are *not to suppose, that the blow is ineffectual as to the total smashing.* The greater part of farmers have, they *must* have, some *capital;* that is to say, the amount of a year or two's produce, over and above the demands of the current year. Some have money at use. In these cases, they flee to the capital to sustain them under the first blow, and to obtain a little time for them. Some are able to stand two or

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three blows. But, I imagine, that a second blow will, if inflicted, nearly turn them up. The tradesman feels, twitch for twitch, with the farmer. Thus is the depression felt through all the veins of the community, and thus do you experience a degree of embarrassment, which that bold botherer, Pitt, never had to encounter. He got over the stoppage of cash-payments at the Bank by reports of Committees, subscribing combinations, false alarms, and divers other devices, calculated to deceive a people full of fear of the enemy, and, from their natural credulity, easily duped. But, *yours is a case* that can receive no aid from *trick* and *contrivance*. It is not now a question of *jacobin* or *anti-jacobin*; it is no question of *alarm*; no question about *religion or government*; no Yeomanry Cavalry, Loyal Associations, or Volunteer Corps will *now avail*. No appeals from the *forum* or the *pulpit* will be of any use. It is not a matter of *seditious* or *treasonable practices*. There are no *Corresponding Societies*, or *Popgun plots*. It is not a question of *passion* but of *money*. The means that would put down a thousand market mobs will now avail nothing. *Majorities* and *minorities* are here out of the question. No *acts of parliament* or *proclamations*; no *Societies for the Suppression of Vice*; no Lancaster or Bell's *Schools*; no *Bible-Associations*, will do any good."

Just so; is it not! You have tried all the tricks, and they have all failed. You have tried Suspensions of *Habeas Corpus*; you have tried *Gagging-bills*; you have tried *plots* enough; you have tried *Sidmouth's Circulars*; you have tried the *Yeomanry Cavalry* to the utmost and their sabres too; you have tried *Six-Acts*, and have made it law that we shall be banished if we endeavour to bring you into contempt: And, still, that Devil of the Boroughmongers, the Debt, lives and sticks to you like a leech! Outcries against

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Sedition and *Blasphemy* you have tried to their utmost. "No Popery" has been pressed into the service. And still the Boroughmongers' Devil lives, and lives jovially too. Speeches and Sermons and Charges and all other sorts of things have you tried. And still the Boroughmongers are more uneasy than ever!

But, pray, what *justification* have you for having neglected to act upon the knowledge taught you in the article that I have just quoted? What *defence* have you? If there be any such thing as *Ministerial Responsibility*, what ground of charge can be better than that which is to be found in your neglect of the knowledge conveyed to you in the above quoted article? Was it not your *duty* to attend to it? Was it not your duty duly to consider the matter; to see whether it were reasonable or not; to see whether the cause there stated were really the cause of the evil? *Now* all the world sees that the cause was there truly and clearly laid before you; *now* you are, though with great reluctance, compelled to acknowledge this yourself; *now* you are proposing to make *new banks*, and to perpetuate *small notes* in order to *increase the quantity of the currency* for the purpose of *alleviating the distress*. This, then, if there were a reformed parliament, would be the time *to call you to account* for neglecting to attend to my advice, and to the knowledge that I communicated to you, in 1815; and, if I were now in the House of Commons, I would soon let you see, that you are not to destroy hundreds of thousands of families of farmers and tradesmen without being put *upon your defence*. I do not mean defence against *speeches*. I mean defence against *articles of accusation regularly drawn up and moved!* That is what I mean. I agree perfectly with Sir F. BURDETT, in what he said on Tuesday night; "That "measure (Peel's Bill) together "with those that had preceded it, "had brought the country from

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"hope to despair. There was no "measure of the Noble Lord, or "of any other minister, which "had been so ruinous; there was "no state more distressing than "that produced by those changes; "there could be no greater blun-"der—there could be no *greater* "*crime* [cheers.] Yes, he would "say the evils had been exces-"sive; and ministers should ac-"tually be *impeached* for not "having taken proper measures "for preventing the *destructive* "*consequences*. How *many fami-*"*lies*, how many men, had it "brought to complete, though "unexpected ruin?"

Yes; but the worst of it is, the Honourable Baronet *only talks* of impeaching you. What the country wants is a man to *do* as well as talk; and, unreformed as the parliament is, an *impeachment*, really brought forward on this ground would have a great and most excellent effect. It would make you and your colleagues clearly *understand* the subject, at any rate. It would put all the matter *in due form* for you. And why, then, is the thing *not done*? I may, I trust, reasonably put this question to Sir Francis Burdett. He says, that you *should* be impeached; and, why does he not impeach you? He that says it should be done, is the man *to do it*.

If he were so disposed, the matter of charge would arrange itself somewhat in this way: I. That so many hundreds of thousands of families have been totally ruined by the measures which have altered the value of the currency; II. That the Ministers proposed, and caused to be adopted, these measures; III. That they did this *wilfully*, because they had before them, at every stage, Cobbett's Register, demonstrating to them that the total ruin aforesaid would be amongst the consequences of those measures.

Nothing would be easier than the clapping on you such a blister as this; but, you know well, that the Honourable Baronet is *not in*

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earnest; that he means to do no such a thing; that he has too much interest in the stability of "*the Regiment*," as he himself once well called it; and that, in short, from all attacks of this serious and efficient kind you are as safe as any *great, bloated, squeaking, bag of tripe* is from a pistol *without ball in it*, fired off for the purpose of causing that squeaking bag to *live with honour!* But, if we *had a man*, as I have often said; *if we had a man*, he would soon put your case before the country *in due form*; and that you know well. He would soon put your deeds down in black and white; and would leave you to *jest*, if you could find stomach for it. *A man* would teach you that the plea of *ignorance* is no plea for those who receive enormous salaries as *statesmen*, and who assist in passing laws to punish men with *banishment for life*, for attempting to bring them into *contempt!* If a tradesman, or servant, undertake that which he is incapable of, and does great injury to the employer in consequence, he is liable to an *action of damages*. If a man falsely pass himself off as a regular bred surgeon, when he is no surgeon, and kill another in cutting off his arm, he is to be *tried for murder*. And, if a man take upon him the managing of the affairs of a nation, and bring misery upon millions by means against which he has been constantly warned, while he himself is pocketing an enormous salary, is he not to be *answerable* in some shape or other?

Mr. ROBINSON complained, on Tuesday night, that all the blame was laid on the Ministers; that the evils were all imputed to them. If not to them, to *whom*, pray? To the *Parliament?* I do not, for my part, care which. *Reform the Parliament*, then. But to say that *nobody else* could have done better, is impudent indeed, when you have had before you, for the last *twelve years* a *demonstration*, that any attempt to resume cash-payments *without reducing the interest of the Debt* would produce

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the very effects that that attempt has now produced. Since the year 1809, inclusive, there have been 674 Political Registers published; and, in each of more than 200 of those Registers, there is enough contained to show that you and your colleagues have brought this evil upon the country against the warnings, against the remonstrances, against the demonstrations laid before you.

But, you *did not read*, perhaps? That is your fault. But you did read, or you ordered *Gibbs* and others to read for you! *Gibbs's* reading was followed by a *practical result*, of which the nation has long been feeling the effect. Sidmouth told the Lords, that *he* read very carefully the *cheap publications;* that he laid them before the law-officers; and that be was *sorry to say*, that they could find nothing in them to *prosecute*. So that you were hunting after matter to *prosecute*, and not after matter to *instruct you* in your duty! In your eagerness to hunt out something to *prosecute*, you overlooked all the warnings that you ought to have attended to. However, the landlords and the parsons supported you in all this; and it is they who will, at last, have to bear the consequences. The farmers, as *a body*, supported you too; and their share of the suffering they have endured, or will endure. What is now passing under our eyes, and what is now coming on; these things are no more than the natural consequences of the support given to you and your colleagues by those who now suffer and are to suffer.

But, you are *turning about*, and will *save these your friends!* Oh, no! That is too late. *Some* you may save for a while; but, many are already ruined; and justice will fall with its heavy hand upon *all* before it be over. The present *schemes*, the *new bank note project*, even the *repeal of Peel's Bill*, will not save your supporters. They must *all come down* before it be over, do what you will, or do what they

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will, or can, to prevent it. Though it is truly curious to observe the scheming, the "general working of events" that is now going on.

There is such a mass of scheming at work, that it would require a good thick volume barely to give a description of it. Let me, therefore, confine myself to the prominent, not "the *fundamental,*" features of your *own schemes*. The *funding* of the *half-pay and pensions* is, as Mr. LENNARD called it, a mere *hoax;* but, it is to serve as the pretext for *taking off some taxes*. As to this; the landlords, and all of us indeed, say, go on, hoax or hoax not; so that you *take off taxes*. Fund the sunshine or moonshine, if you like, so that you take off taxes. But, the other scheme is of a more serious nature, the scheme for *making paper-payments perpetual*. I long to see this scheme in a *tangible shape*. I long to see it in distinct propositions, as thus: 1. That Country banks as well as the Borough-bank shall be permitted to make small notes *for everlasting*, that is to say, for 22 years to come. 2. That Country Ragmen shall be able to make Borough-bank rags a *legal tender* in payment of their own rags. 3. That the Borough-bank notes shall be a *legal tender* to all eternity in the payment of taxes.

This is the scheme that has been what the French call *ébauché*, or *thrown out*. Now, then, let us see that scheme adopted; and let us see you *stop there!* It will be a repeal of *part of Peel's Bill*, which puts *an end to legal tender on the 1st of May* 1823. It will be that. It will be an act *to prevent the return to cash payments* as far as it goes. But, now mark me, if nothing *more* be done, you will not do much. For, though the Country Ragmen will be protected against demands for gold, *the Borough-bank will not!* That renowned concern *must* continue to pay in sovereigns, or in bars at 77*s.* 10½*d.* an ounce *till next May;* and then it *must* pay in *sovereigns on demand*. What, therefore, will

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you *get* by this scheme, unless you go *farther?* Your scheme, though it will make paper *legal tender*; though it will repeal Peel's Bill in part; though it will fulfil my prophesy; though it will heist the Gridiron and give us the broiling Feast; though it will bring thousands of poor geese to a premature death; though it will do all this, it will not *better* the lot of the landlords and parsons. It will not raise prices; and consequently, it will not give *rents* and leave *tithes*, for these latter the poor must have.

All these juggling schemes are nothing, unless you alter the Bill as to the price at which the Borough-bank is to put out gold. It is *beastly*, really *beastly*; not absurd, not stupid, but beastly, to suppose, that prices can rise, on an average of seasons, without *an addition to the quantity of the circulating medium*; and you may make banks as numerous as chandler's shops, you can make no such addition without *repealing Peel's Bill in whole*. If you add to the quantity of the paper, it will sink in value; and one of two things will happen; namely, there will be *two prices at once*, or people will go to the Borough-bank, get gold for the paper, and send the gold out of the country. This is so plain that even the geese that we are going to broil must perceive it, if the matter were clearly stated to them. And I do not know, that I shall not, before we kill them, state it to an *Assembly*, a *House* full, of them.

Well, then, will you make the Borough-Bank *stop again!* Ah! do! Do, if you are man enough! Why, it will be a jest for ever and ever. Every feature in this world, except it be of a face belonging to "*the regiment*" will be set in motion with laughter. Now, I verily believe, that this will be done. Nay, if it be not done, the rest of the scheme is mere mockery. I see you are *preparing to give way*. You did not *answer* Mr. Atwood. You *put that off*, till

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Mr. *Western's motion* came forward! Oh! You did not *reprobate* Mr. Western's motion *before hand?* And, I verily believe, that you will *give way;* that you will yield; and that your half-way scheme will be *stopped in its progress* by Mr. Western's motion. The thing may take this turn: Mr. Western may *amend* your scheme. What think you of that?

However, when this is once done, and done I verily believe it will be, there is an end of the THING! Mind that. Its breath is knocked out of it. It may live some little time in name; but, it will be a mass of *Assignats;* and this will be notorious to the whole world. There will be monstrous injustice attending it; but that is not the thing to look at. It will lay the whole THING bare. It will be *open and notorious bankruptcy,* just as much as that of the French Convention, when it passed its law of *Assignats.* All the world will know, that cash *can never again be seen,* till the paper be destroyed root and branch. All the lies about the ability of the Borough-bank to pay in gold will die at once. All the impostors will vanish, and will take some time at any rate before a new race will get credit enough to cheat the nation. Any attempt, or, rather, pretence to set *bounds* to the paper issues will end in failure and ridicule. Mr. Western talks of a *metallic basis* even *while he proposes to repeal Peel's Bill.* What *basis,* unless payment in gold on demand? Will he *lower the standard?* No matter what, however. It is all confusion. It is all hubbub. It is all *going to pieces;* and thus I leave it in your lordship's hands, desiring you to comfort yourself with reflecting on the *clapping of hands* and on the *huzzas,* which you received from the Honourable House, when you walked in after your memorable exploits in restoring the Bourbon!

WM. COBBETT.

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TO

MY DISCIPLES.

"Now's the time for mirth and glee:
"Sing and laugh and dance with me."

Kensington, 9 *May* 1822.

MY FRIENDS,

LET others employ themselves as they choose, it is for us to *enjoy ourselves*. I have to speak to you about preparations for the *Feast of the Gridiron*; but, before I do that I must call your attention to something that has been said by Mr. WESTERN, and also to a speech of *Lockhart the Brave*, who, you remember, *challenged* me at Winchester, in the winter of 1817. You have a share in these matters as well as I have. You are equally interested with myself; and you ought, all over the country, now to insist upon your *right to exult*.

I always said, when insulted and flouted by the THING and its adherents, that *our time would come*; and, I said, too, that I would *claim our due*; that our enemies should not *steal into our track* unnoticed; that, when they came to our shop, they should come in at the *street-door*, or get kicked and cuffed from the back-door. I knew they *must come*, and I suspected they would endeavour to slip in without being seen. This they have been attempting in many instances; but in no instance more shamefully than in that of *Mr. Western*. That Gentleman published a pamphlet full of plagiarisms on me from one end to the other. He published a second, and, in that second, he quoted *Locke* as his great teacher. I noticed that; and, the other day, at the Essex Meeting, he took what he appears to have thought his revenge. I shall insert what I allude to; and then comment upon it. This is a great matter, *with us*, at any rate; for, we must not suffer ourselves to be plundered at this rate with impunity to the plunderers. You will observe, that, just before the

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meeting at Chelmsford opened, a boy, who was in front of the Town Hall, selling Cobbett's "*Farmer's Wife's Friend*" was "*driven* away by the *Magistrates*," of whom, you will bear in mind, this Mr. Western was *one*. However, take the report as given in the Morning Chronicle.

The Hon. Gentleman after some further observations, said, that he had now to read to them the opinions of a man who was well known to them all, and who, by the by, had taken him to task pretty severely; he meant Mr. Cobbett [cries of "put him down," and of "no, no."] He had been attacked by Mr. Cobbett, because he quoted from Locke in preference to quoting from Mr. Cobbett. He really had respect for talents of every description, wherever he found them, but he did conceive that the meeting would bear him out in believing that more importance ought to be attached to the writings of Mr. Locke than to those of Mr. Cobbett—(Loud applause.)—For it was well known that Mr. Locke had a century ago broached the same sentiments as those since put forward by Mr. Cobbett, and therefore Mr. Cobbett might perhaps be charged, and not without reason, with having derived his opinions from Mr. Locke. But notwithstanding all this, Mr. Cobbett had strongly predicted the effects of Mr. Peel's Bill. It was, however, but justice to add, that Sir R. Peel, a gentleman whose character was admired and venerated by all who knew him, had previously predicted the effects of this measure. He stated that he could not, without alarm, contemplate the effects of the measure which was about to be introduced. He should now read to the meeting an extract from a Pamphlet written in America, from which it was well known he had shortly after returned to this country. Mr. Cobbett did, on that occasion, certainly draw a most prophetic picture of the distresses which this Bill was likely to bring upon the country. He should read to the meeting a short extract from that work:—

"Of all the wild schemes that "ever issued from the heads of "weak and obstinate men, this "(Peel's Bill) is the wildest, this "is the most visionary; and the "fate of it will be something like "this: after having caused un-"speakable misery among the "poorer classes; after having "crushed a great part of the mid-"dle classes; after having driven "away to foreign lands a consi-"derable portion of the real re-"sources of the country; after "having brought the nation to the "eve of some terrible convulsion;

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"after all this, it will be aban-
"doned; and never will an ex-
"pectation of seeing cash-payments
"again exist in any mind except
"that of a born idiot. The result
"can be prevented only by a *pre-*
"*vious convulsion.*"

There was, however, another part of Mr. Cobbett's writings which it was perhaps more difficult to understand. He meant the opinions expressed by him in his Number of the 4th of April. He there recommended Mr. Peel's Bill as a panacea for all the distresses of the country.—His words were these:—

"This is the state of things *now;*
"but let Peel's Bill go into full ef-
"fect; let *legal tender be put an end*
"*to;* let the Ragman be *compelled*
"to give *gold*, and not Mother
"Bank notes in exchange for his
"rags; let the country people be
"able to go to him next May, with
"Peel's Bill in their hand, and say,
"'give me a *sovereign* for this rag;'
"let that happy day come, and
"then we shall see gold all over
"the country, and wheat on an
"average of years, at 4 *shillings*
"*a bushel*, or perhaps, at *three shil-*
"*lings!* This is what I have been
"telling the money-hoarders for a
"long time. Ah! but this happy
"day is not to arrive! Castle-
"reagh is coming with his measure
"to be submitted to the '*wisdom* of
"Parliament,' and it is now to de-
"cide, whether or not it be the best
"'*course of policy to* establish a
"*metallic basis!*' In short, a *law* is
"now to be proposed to enable
"country bankers *to refuse to pay in*
"*gold* after May 1823, until May
"1833! Make it *for ever!* None
"of your haggling about it. It is
"eternity."

You will at once see the *meanness* of this conduct on the part of Mr. Western. The last quotation from me you will perceive he has garbled famously. He has left out what was most essential to my meaning; and what a want of comprehension or want of candour must he have had to say, that I "*recommended* Peel's "Bill as a *panacea* for all the dis-"tresses of the country"! When it is notorious, that, from the hour it was passed to the present hour I have been describing it and the measures that preceded it as the cause of all the distress! What a silly thing to say, or what a foul misrepresentation! Nay, that very pamphlet of mine which the *Magistrates* had "*driven* away," as well as that which Mr. Western was quoting, proved

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the ridiculous of this assertion of his.

However, let me not take up too much of your time with this matter. Two points I will just touch on. He says, that *Locke* wrote a *hundred years ago;* and that, therefore, "I may have *borrowed from him.*" Borrowed, *what*? Why, he never wrote about *Peel's Bill*, did he? Did he ever hear about cash-payments to supersede paper-payments? Did he ever hear about National Debts? Did he, could he, write about any such matter? Oh, no! And his *Essay on Money*, and even the passage quoted by Mr. Western, is *false* in doctrine; and, what proof do we want of this more than this one fact, that LOCKE was *one of Mr. Peel's authorities for the passing of his Bill!* So that this is a very pretty story indeed. A very pretty piece of humbug, to pretend that my prophecies were stolen from LOCKE!

Well; but there was "SIR "ROBERT PEEL, *venerated by* "*every body.*" That is false. All that I know, and talk with about him, despise the pompous old proprietor of Spinning Jennies. Not because he is a Master Manchester Manufacturer; but, because they have seen nothing in his conduct to excite any other feeling. They remember that he was one of those who *subscribed towards carrying on the war against the people of France.* They remember all his movements well, and feel towards him any thing but *veneration*. But, what of *him*, Mr. Western? Why, he *foretold* the evils of his son's Bill *before* I did. Indeed? What, before I wrote the *Letter to Tierney*, which was published in England *nine months before* the Bill was passed? This, however, is too contemptible to be dwelt on. Yet, we must ask Mr. Western how it came to pass that he himself, who had always had *Locke*, and who, at the passing of the Bill, heard Sir Robert Peel, *did not pay attention to either*, and suffered Peel's Bill

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to pass *without one word of opposition to it*?

Now for "*Lockhart the Brave*," whose speech of Wednesday evening I here insert. You will see that the gentleman is in great anxiety about the *Church*, and about the *Poor*. But, let us hear him first, and then talk a little in our turn.

Mr. LOCKHART said, he did not wish to take up much of the time of the House, but he wished the question then in consideration to be understood, and not to be blended and mixed up with questions of the nature just now proposed. A very *melancholy*, and, he *believed a true picture*, had been given of the distresses of the country. An apprehension had been entertained that there would be no means of employing the poor; and it was stated that the hand of every man *was raised against each other*; not indeed in actual hostility, but in those active law proceedings, in which each was willing to inculpate his neighbour, and to save himself harmless. To this it was added, *that the clergy*, that *great and venerable body of men*, was *reduced to the brink of ruin*: and if the case at Norfolk was truly reported, respecting the obligation to pay the poor-rates out of the tithes on land otherwise unproductive, then the destruction of the *property of that great and venerable body was completed*, which, if the House had some time ago agreed to regulate, it might have been exempted. The remedies hinted at before, and now more openly avowed, were *the repeal of Peel's Bill*, which few liked to advocate, a *great reduction of taxation, and a forced reduction of the national debt*. For his part he considered both the last mentioned remedies as one and the same. [Hear, hear! from the Ministerial benches.] The reduction of twenty millions of taxation must have the effect of producing a forced reduction of the debt. [Hear, hear!] As long as he knew the agriculturists, and he knew them long, this was not their wish. In the 500 petitions which were presented to the House on the agricultural distress, he allowed that a reduction of taxation was called for, but in a reasonable proportion, and not on such a scale as *would produce a forced reduction of the national debt*. Some attributed the existing evils to foreign competition, and others to superabundant produce. Of the latter he was by no means convinced. The distress had occasioned the agriculturists to go into the market, but that was no proof of agricultural distress. If he went into a pawnbroker's shop and saw that there was a greater quantity of apparel

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pledged than usual, that would not be a proof to him that the people who pledged them had a superabundance of clothes. [Hear, and a laugh.] He would rather imagine that distress had occasioned the overstock, and not a superabundance. He then proceeded to remark upon what had fallen from the Honourable Member for Portarlington, (Mr. Ricardo) as one mode of relieving distress by throwing poor lands out of cultivation. If he did not know his *amiable disposition*, and the *goodness of his heart*, he must have been inclined to doubt the existence of those qualities which marked his character, when he spoke of land apparently without any consideration of the *sensitive* and *suffering beings by which it was occupied*. But what were poor lands? He did not know what they were. Perhaps the Honourable Member for Portarlington was for throwing out of cultivation all lands which did not possess any great quantity of vegetable mould, such as was mostly composed of *calcarious* and *silicious* matter; but this formed a great proportion of the land of England, and if he were to throw such lands out of cultivation, *how were the poor who occupied them to be employed?* Were they capable of any other labour but the cultivation of the land? Could their hard hands be applied to any of the arts? And were not the manufactures of the country already overstocked? The Honourable Member for Portarlington ought to be prepared with some prospectus, showing how the poor could be employed and absorbed in the occupations of society. There was a great *deal of poor land in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire*, and *Gloucestershire*. If these were thrown out of cultivation, and if the ports were not opened, what might not be the danger resulting from an *inflamed population deprived of their accustomed food?*

Now, Mr. Lockhart, let *me* have a little talk with you, and let me begin with the *parsons*. You know, that, in March 1817, the Dungeon Bill being just then about to pass, or it might be passed, I had to meet you, at Winchester, you being backed by a band of the *blackest* and most noisy and abusive ruffians that ever wore clean shirts. You know, that you supported, at their suggestion, an Address to the Regent, containing, amongst other things, a pledge to uphold the *Church*. You know, that I proposed to put in the word *tithes* instead of Church, and to add

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something about *Reform of Parliament*. You remember how I *worked* you, and how angry you were. But, do you remember this; that I told the *parsons* that they, *above all others*, ought to be for a *Reform of the Parliament*; for, that, nothing but Reform could save their *tithes* from being *swallowed up in four years' time!* Those very words I uttered over and over again, amidst the *hootings* and *revilings* of, at least, *two hundred parsons*; and this can, if necessary, be proved on the oath of hundreds of witnesses.

Let us, then, my Disciples, be merry; let us laugh and sing at what is now taking place as to this "great and venerable body." I was *one year too soon in my* guess; though, really, the pinch began last year. We have now *Lockhart the Brave's* word for it, that "this great and venerable body is on the brink of ruin." And why? Because of the *weight of the taxes*, which is owing, as we all know, to a *want of Reform*, and to *nothing else!* But, what can Mr. Lockhart mean by the House doing any thing to *exempt the tithes* from poor-rates? Does he suppose, that the parson is to thrive, is to grow fat, is to gain, by a state of things that *ruins the farmer*, and *leaves the landlord without rent?* "If the decision in Norfolk be *truly* stated." What does he mean by this? How can any *other decision* take place? Here is the farmer with no profit; here is the landlord with no rent; and, is the parson to have all his *usual gains*? Is he to have *as much clear* as if the farmer had profit and the landlord rent? This really is nonsense; begging Mr. Lockhart's pardon, it is sheer nonsense.

This "great and venerable body" have had their full share of the gains from high prices and depreciated paper-money; they were always the foremost, the very foremost, in urging on the war; they have always been the most zealous in keeping down those who prayed for a reduction of taxes and for Reform of Par-

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liament; and, as their kingdom is not of this world, as they have solemnly vowed to disregard the things of the flesh, they can hardly complain now, that they have little or nothing left in the shape of tithes. Oh, no! Such honest and pious persons can never grudge to give up their tithes to the Fundlords. They know that the money was borrowed to carry on a war for our Holy Religion. It succeeded. It restored the Bourbons, the Pope, and the Inquisition; and, it would be worse than blasphemy to suppose that these "venerable" persons care a straw about the tithes, when them are demanded to pay back the sums borrowed to hire Germans and Russians to put down the Atheistical French.

But, it will be said, it is not to the *Fundlords* that the tithes are going, but to the *paupers*, for the tithes are taken away in *poor-rates*. Stop a little. The *excise* and *other taxes* go to the Fundlords and to the Army and Navy and other things that have chiefly grown out of the war. To pay these taxes the landlord and farmer are so beggared as to have nothing left to pay poor-rates with; and, this being the case, they *throw the poor upon the tithe!* This is the way, in which it works. It is rather complicated. Perhaps it might be better to *make the tithes over*, at once, to the Fundholders. To pay so much Debt off with them. Some scheme will, I dare say, be found out, by-and-by, to *simplify* the thing; but, it is by no means easy to imagine any possible mode of saving this "great and venerable body," without a large, and a *very large, reduction of the interest of the Debt*; and, as it is agreed, on all hands, that this would produce what is called "a *revolution*," the "venerable body" do seem to be very much in that situation usually typified by a *cleft-stick*.

Mr. Lockhart had some remarks upon Mr. Ricardo's idea of *relief* to arise from the "throwing of poor lands out of cultivation." An

odd way, surely enough, to relieve the *owner* of those lands. But, it is not the *owner;* oh, no! not the *landlord* at all, that Mr. Lockhart seems to care about. His care (kind soul!) is for "the *sensitive* and suffering *beings* who *occupy* and who *till* the land." *Rents!* Devil take rents! What does he care about *them?* It is for the poor *farmers* and *labourers* that he feels. He knows, he says, that there is a good deal of poor, *calcarious* land in *Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire* and *Gloucestershire.* And I can tell him of some at a place called *Pressure*, near Bishop's Waltham in Hampshire! Some land such no Norfolk man ever even *dreamed* of, much less *saw.* Some land where the mould is not a bit thicker on the chalk than the crust of a good stout-timbered apple-pudding is on the apples beneath it. Has Mr. Lockhart never *heard* of *these lands?*

But, Mr. Lockhart has a totally wrong view of the matter. I can assure him, that, even on this apple-pudding crust land, the farmer and the labourer will, in the end, do pretty well; as well as they ever have done, *though Peel's Bill be pushed along to the full extent.* The *landlord* indeed! He must look sharply about him; and must, in fact, go without rent. Let us see a little how the "general *working* of events" will affect lands thus situated; and, come, Mr. Lockhart, let you and I suppose a farm to lie at *Pressure* with two full inches of mould on the chalk and that mould mixed pretty well with flint-stones. The farmer can pay no rent. The landlord turns him out, after having sold him up. On the face of the habitable globe another "*sensitive being*," with a penny to risk, is not to be found to risk it at *Pressure.* The landlord tries to farm himself; then he has the rates and taxes to pay, and gets, besides, nothing for rent. He *abandons* the land, and *leaves the* labourers to starve; leaves these "*sensitive beings*" to die with hunger, eh? Oh no! Mr. Lockhart. The Overseer goes *to seize;*

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he finds nothing to seize but the house and land; but, if he find and can find no *occupant*, he *seizes them*. And to save himself all sorts of out-goings, he allots the land to the use of the "sensitive beings" themselves! Oh, no! Mr. Lockhart; these "sensitive beings" will not die with hunger even at *Pressure*. Oh, no! Mr. Ricardo, the poor lands will not be "*thrown out of cultivation*," merely because they no longer yield rent or tithes.

These false notions arise from the want of a capacity to look well into and to analyse the matter. Mr. Ricardo and Mr. Lockhart forget, that *property* is never *absolute*; that no man has an *absolute property in any thing*, and, perhaps, less in land than in any thing else. Mr. *Wodehouse* says, that I have "*no regard for the rights of property*." I have as much as Pitt had, when he *redeemed the land tax*; that is to say, when he took away part of every landed estate in the kingdom. That part was taken away to be given to those that lent money to the Government. Those who bought that gave the money to the Government. And, where is the difference, whether the estate be taken away to be given to the fundlords and army and other things, or whether it be taken to feed the labourers, who, in consequence of the taxes they pay, are unable to get a sufficiency of food without it?

I know, that it is very unpleasant for men to hear it said, that they have not an absolute property in estates that they have so long called *theirs*; but *have they*, if the government can lay a tax on it; then make the tax *perpetual*; and then *sell the tax?* If it can act thus as to the *fiftieth part*; it can do it as to the *whole*. Then again, if the whole can be taken, if the whole income of the land can be taken *indirectly*, as is the case at present in numerous instances, and must soon be the case generally; if this be, as

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it unquestionably is, can any man be said to have an *absolute property* in the land he calls his?

These, my friends, are times and circumstances that try things to the *very bottom*. They compel us to reason deeply whether we will or not. They show the utter worthlessness of *parchments*, when a *government* has demands to make. No lands will be "*thrown out of cultivation.*" And why *poor-lands* should any more than rich who can possibly give a reason? This fear, therefore, of Mr. Lockhart is perfectly groundless. The mistake arises solely from the erroneous notion, that *rents* and *tithes* are necessary to the cultivation of the land, while the fact is, that cultivation can go on very well without either. The short and long of the matter is this: there have hitherto been two classes of persons, the one called *landlords* and the other *parsons*, each receiving a considerable share of the produce of the land; but now, the government standing in need of taxes to so large an amount as to swallow up these two shares, *these two classes can receive them no longer*. This is the whole case. There is not another word necessary in the statement of it. As to whether the government does right or does wrong in demanding the whole, or any part, of these two shares; that is a question to be settled by the parties. It is one in which I really feel very little interest, except as a matter full of curiosity with regard to the manner in which it seems to be *working*.

And, now we come to *our* affair. In order to *save these two shares*, divers schemes are on foot, and, amongst the rest, a repeal in part or in whole of Peel's Bill. It seems settled, that a repeal in part is *speedily to take place*. The *grand Gridiron* to be hoisted at No. 183, Fleet-Street, will be ready; and the Feast will be holden in London as soon after the passing of the Bill as will allow of time to

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spread a knowledge of the thing throughout the country. It is intended, that the Fare, as far as relates to food, shall consist of *geese*, broiled whole; and that the drink shall be made entirely from *simples*. I approve very much of *country festivals*. I will let my correspondents know, beforehand, the precise moment of the day that *Mr. Peel's health will be drunk*, that we may all be putting up our prayers for that precious health at one and the same instant. As to the *Farce* to be acted on the occasion, the time is so short that I am almost afraid it cannot be ready. However, if written, it shall be published in the Register a fortnight, at least, before the day for holding the feast.

I am, your Friend,

WM. COBBETT.

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TO THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE.

On the Reduction of the Interest of the Debt.

Kensington, 15 May, 1822.

MY LORD,

You, in your speech of the 26th of February last, expressed a very decided opinion upon this subject. I just noticed it at the time, and I am now about to state to you the reasons, on which I found an opinion in perfect coincidence with that of your Lordship. Short as the time has been since that speech was delivered, events have arisen, or signs have become visible, to show to a large part of the people, that your notion of the *injustice* of reducing the interest was unsound! At that time hopes were still entertained, that *things would come about of themselves.* That hope, which I had so often ridiculed, seems now to be abandoned by every one. All the jew-like notions of Mr. RICARDO, Mr. PEEL, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. CANNING and SAINT HORNER, appear to have taken their flight, except from the minds of the parties themselves and from those of the Edinburgh Reviewers. The first of my three letters to Lord Liverpool seems to have rooted out whatever remained of the teachings of this parblind school; and men now clearly see the truth of what I have, for so many years, endeavoured to inculcate; namely, that one of these three things must be: 1. An open abandonment of all pretences about returning to cash-payments, or, in other words,

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the confession of an inability ever to pay in cash, and the adventuring forth upon the sea of paper-money. 2. A total transfer of all the estates, especially those in land, in the whole kingdom. Or, 3. A positive and direct reduction, to a very large extent, of the debt vulgarly called national.

The truth of this is now clearly seen, and, generally, pretty frankly acknowledged by ninety-nine out of every hundred men who do not profit by the Debt, or, in some way or other live on the taxes. All, in short, admit this truth, except those who *gain* by the continuance of error with regard to the subject. It is, therefore, with the parties most deeply interested, and who, at the same time, have most *power* to act in the case, a *choice* out of the three; and, that they will not choose the *second*; that is to say, the loss of their estates, is, I think, pretty certain. To come to a barefaced system of *Assignats*, or to reduce the Debt *by law*, are, therefore, the things that they have to choose between.

Before I go any further, I shall insert the passage of your Lordship's speech, to which I before alluded. "With regard to a hope "of reduction of taxation from a "reduction of the interest of the "debt, in any way contrary to "*existing laws* and to *good faith*, "he was as ready as the Noble "Earl to *brand* it with the *most* "*decided reprobation*. The country might, indeed, for no possi- "bility should be excluded from "their view, be reduced to a state "in which it would be *impossible* "to meet its most solemn engage- "ments; but he was far from "taking any such desponding "view of the circumstances of "the country as to suppose that it "was now, or *was likely*, to be in "such a condition. While it was "not in such a state, they were "called upon by every claim of "*policy*, of *honour*, and of *mora-* "*lity*, to *oppose such a sugges-*

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"sion," and if he should be so "*unfortunate as to list to such* "*a suggestion entertained*, he "hoped he should be *found in his* "*place*, as the Noble Earl would "also be, *to resist it to the utmost* "*of his might and power*."

Now, my Lord, here are certain words, which admit of different interpretations. "*Existing laws and good faith*" may mean, that "good faith" requires the *enforcement* of "existing laws;" or, it may mean, that you "reprobate" any thing contrary to existing laws and *also* contrary to good faith. However, I think, the fair interpretation is, that you look upon good faith requiring the execution of existing laws; that is to say, the payment of the interest of the Debt in full, and *in cash*.

You do, however, make use of a qualification; for you say, that it is *possible* for the country to be reduced to a state, in which it would be *impossible* for it to meet its *most solemn* engagements; but, that, while you do not think it *likely* to be in such a state, you think yourself called upon to resist any proposition for a reduction of the Debt unless the country be in such state of *impossibility*. Now, your Lordship will please to bear in mind, that to repeal Peel's Bill, to make Borough bank notes a legal tender in the payment of country rags or in the payment of taxes, or even to pass a small-rag bill; you will be pleased to bear in mind, that these, or any of these, are "*contrary to existing laws*;" that even the two latter, or either of them, is, to a certain *extent* (not great indeed) a violation of what you call *good faith*; and that, as to the repeal of Peel's Bill *in whole*, it will be a reduction of the interest of the Debt to the amount of *one-half*, or *two-thirds*, if not an *annihilation* of it altogether; unless, indeed, provision be made for paying the *dividends* in gold, while the *taxes* are paid in paper: and this would, I think, put the "*Omnipotence*" of the Collective Wisdom to the test.

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be that, according to your Lordship's notion, there must be none of these measures adopted. Nay, to put a stop to the *sinking fund* would also be a violation of good faith; for it would clearly be contrary to existing laws; and would certainly lessen the value of the fundholder's stock. And nothing of this sort would you have done, until the country be reduced to a state in which it would be *impossible* for it to meet these which you call its most solemn engagements. And you say that you are very far from supposing that the country *now is*, or *is likely* to be, in such a condition.

Thus, then, you seem to forbid the adoption of any of the measures now in contemplation, either of the Ministers or of any body else, for what is called the relief of the country. There can be *no reduction of taxes*; for all the present taxes are wanted to satisfy the demands of existing laws. They are all wanted to pay the fundholders, to pay the *fighters* and *Whitehall*, both of whom are necessary to get together the means of paying the fundholders; or to pay *Waterloo*, which is a much better name than "*dead charge*," which is a very lively charge, consisting, as it does, of sums due to great numbers of most sprightly whiskered gentlemen, some with titles of Knight, and with medals at their button-holes, and of very pretty widows and very pretty children of all ages. It is a very lively charge, a pretty round sum of which is due to heroes who live in Hanover, and who, notwithstanding their half-pay from us, may be fighting in the armies of other countries, and for any thing that existing laws say to the contrary, in the armies of our enemies! This branch of expenditure, therefore, I call *Waterloo*; and I am sure it is very ungracious to call it a *dead charge*, and represent it, as the Ministers do, as a dead weight, when it is no more than a part of the "*reckoning*" which we have to pay before we sit down jovially "to *supper*." When we talk of a dead weight, we al-

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ways mean something that is of no use to us; and, to be sure, a part of these pretty persons can be of not much use to us; but certainly even the widows and children and the heroes in Hanover are of as much use to us as the fundholders are. They neither fight nor work for us. They have got their names in the great book. That is all; and the others have got their names in the book of Waterloo; so, that, really, I do not see why Waterloo is to be called a "*dead charge*" any more than 'Change Alley is to be called a dead charge. The parties are equally *lively*, and each gives a sufficient degree of activity to the taxgatherer. When the labourer pays fifteen shillings tax upon his bushel of salt, it is no matter to him, whether he pay it to *Waterloo* or to *'Change Alley*.

The taxes are *all* wanted; every farthing of them is wanted, to pay the expenses of these things; and I wish your Lordship to bear in mind that they are *four*; *'Change Alley*, or *Jerusalem*; *Whitehall* (or the place, pension, sinecure and allowance people); the *Horse-Guards* (or the present standing army in time of peace); and *Waterloo*, or those who have claims on account of their services in restoring the Bourbons, the Pope and the Inquisition; and in re-establishing "the *social system*." These demand the whole of the taxes at present raised. And, therefore, as your Lordship will agree to no reduction of *Jerusalem*, which must mean, that you will agree to no alteration of the present currency; for, it would be a sad shuffle to agree to a *clipping of the shilling* while you make such solemn protestations against reduction; as you will agree to no reduction of *Jerusalem's* share, you will, of course, agree to no reduction of the shares of the others in the way of clipping, or repeal of Peel's Bill. Thus, then, you stand pledged to *resist* all reduction in this way, directly as well as indirectly, as long as the nation can *possibly* continue to pay.

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Stand to that my lord! Neither reduce Jerusalem, nor reduce the currency, and I pledge myself for a riddance of the *burgage tenures* in a very short time. Stand to that! I agree with your Lordship most cordially, though the world may think that I want the *feast of the Gridiron*. I should like it very much; but, I should like the *Feast of the Burgage Tenures* better; and, therefore, I am decidedly with your Lordship. Those who now hold the estates will lose them, unless they themselves belong to Jerusalem, Whitehall, the Horse-Guards or Waterloo; but, what is that? They *pledged them*, in order to re-establish the "*Social System*." That has been done for them; and, shall they now *keep the estates*? What! I pledge my coat to get the means of buying me a bottle or two of gin; and, when I have swallowed the gin; shall I keep the coat, and pretend that I am still the *owner* of it. Shall I still call myself a coat-owner, as some impudent and foolish men now call themselves land-owners? They do not *own* the land. The land is none of theirs until they have paid off Jerusalem, Whitehall, Horse-Guards and Waterloo. The great chuckleheads think, that they are to keep the land and merely *talk* of paying off the pledge; merely giving to the *real owners* of land paper promises *to promise* to pay them. There never was any thing much more impudent and foolish than this. But, thank God, they have crews to deal with who are not so easily to be shuffled off!

I shall now endeavour to describe to your Lordship some of the schemes that are on foot to shuffle out of this payment; to shuffle out of those "most solemn engagements" of which your Lordship speaks. I shall endeavour to describe those schemes and their consequences; to show the *injustice* and *cruelty* of repealing Peel's Bill; and to refute that erroneous idea of Mr. Brougham, that the country will be *destroyed* by a transfer of the

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estates. I agree with him, that the estates will be transferred, except the owners belong to one of the crews of tax-eaters, who, by-the-by, are not "*low, degraded* crews;" I agree with him, that the estates will be transferred, and that they are now actually *transferring*; but, I also agree with your Lordship, that the payment ought to continue till the nation cannot *possibly* pay any longer; and I am prepared to show, that that *impossibility* to pay, of which your Lordship speaks, can *never* arise.

The schemes that are on foot for shuffling out of the payment due to Jerusalem, Whitehall, Horse-Guards and Waterloo are of a most discreditable description. They mean *reduction*, though they affect to talk of *full payment*. Mr. Western proposes, as he by no means disguises, to repeal the Bill of Peel. But, what is to follow? The same *nominal* sum is, indeed, to be paid to Jerusalem; but it will be a sum that will not purchase nearly half so many quartern loaves as the present sum will purchase. Here, now, is a pretty Waterloo gentleman, with whiskers two inches long and with spurs of great length screwed into the heels of his Wellington-boots. See how gay he looks. And, would Mr. Western, by a legerdemain trick of paper-money, cut off those nice rough and curling whiskers and pull out his spurs; when, perhaps, the hero is also a knight? If he mean this, why does he not say so at once; and not attempt it by a trick of paper-money?

Oh, no; he will say, that he still means to pay every one in *full*. In full! What is full? Full payment is so much money down in gold at 77*s.* 10*d.* an ounce. Any thing else is not full payment, and this is what "*existing laws*" demand. Any thing short of this is a breach of "most solemn engagements." And, has Mr. Western no *gratitude*? He, as well as the rest, could eagerly enough take a share of the "*glory*"

of *Waterloo*; and will he not *pay* for that share? Is his money, or, rather, his land, dearer to him, than the *blood* of the heroes was dear to them? Shall men, who have "*fought* and *bled* in defence of their country", be told, that they must go in part unpaid, because the owners of the land cannot spare enough to pay them with? What is *land* compared with the precious blood spilt in battle!

Shameful, however, as such a species of injustice would be, it is clear that it is in contemplation; and, Sir JOHN SINCLAIR has not only proposed it, but has urged it in several separate publications, which he has, I understand, sent to every member of both Houses of Parliament. Copies of these have been sent to me. Sir John Sinclair publishes what he calls *proofs* of the following assertion, namely, "that a paper circulation "(not convertible into coin at a "*low* and *antiquated* standard) if "issued on proper principles is "the greatest political discovery "of modern times, being the *only* "*mode* by which a heavy load of "taxes and an immense burthen "of debt can be rendered sup-"portable." These proofs are no proofs at all. They are only a new set of assertions. In the course of them he says: "a "paper-circulation not convertible into coin is the only means "by which we can be enabled to "raise such a revenue as will "enable us to diminish the na-"tional debt." And he says, further on, that the Bank-restriction system, was the wisest measure that ever was adopted! The words here are so remarkable, especially as coming from a man belonging to the Government, that I must insert them. "Indeed," says he, "if a body of the ablest states-"men that ever governed the va-"rious nations of Europe had "sat in conclave to discover the "*greatest stroke in politics* that "human ingenuity could invent, "it was impossible for them to "have hit upon a plan compara-"ble for its effects to that mea-

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"sure which was most *fortunate*-"ly brought about, by a series "of unlooked-for circumstances." Sir John, being a person belonging to the British Government, pleads, I suppose, a privileged exemption from the laws of grammar; otherwise, in place of *it was*, in the above sentence, he would have thought himself obliged to make use of *it would have been*. But his privilege is, of course, understood, as exempting him from all vulgar rules and all kinds of criticism relating to language. This exemption, however, must not be allowed to extend to doctrines; and here we have that very measure which Lord Liverpool, Lord Grenville, Mr. Peel, Mr. Tierney, your Lordship, and, in short, both Houses of Parliament, stigmatized as the most unfortunate measure that ever was adopted; as the most unwise, the most mischievous, the most deadly, that ever was thought of; we have that very measure represented by the collector-general of taxes for Scotland, as the greatest stroke in politics that human ingenuity could invent!

But, as to the substance; what is it that is recommended; why, to repeal Peel's Bill; and to come at once to a down-right barefaced blackguard and roguish paper-money, not convertible into gold and silver, and made, as Sir John expresses himself elsewhere, a legal tender, not only in transactions between the Bank and its creditors; not only between the Government and its creditors; but between man and man; and thus to act over again what was once acted by all the States of America when they were colonies; by the old Congress of America; and by the convention of Robespierre.

It will be said, however, that the present system; that is to say, payments in money, is equally ruinous. I do not think so. It will totally ruin landlords, if they be not tax-eaters; but, as I shall endeavour to show by-and-by, it will not be so ruinous to the most numerous class of the community; for I am prepared to show,

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that the cultivation of the land can go on very well without the payment of either rents or tithes; and also to show, that it ought to come to this, rather than that the landlords should now be suffered to inflict this intolerable scourge of false money, of paper-money, upon the country. The effect which the present system has had upon the owners of land was very clearly illustrated in my petition to the Parliament. That petition was not presented with the smallest desire that it should produce any effect. The object was merely to have something on record, under my own name, and in the books of the House. That petition was presented just two years ago. Two years after it, comes the petition of Mr. *Charles A. Thomson*, which I shall here insert, in order to have it on record also. Here is a man totally ruined, according to his own statement. But, as we shall presently see, he blunders along with the errors of Ricardo in his mind; those errors so fatal to the landlords, and so clearly exposed by me from the very moment that a knowledge of them reached me. However, the petition is valuable. It gives a striking instance of the literal truth of all the predictions in my letter to Tierney, written in July 1818, published in England in September of the same year, and now republished for the fifth or sixth time, together with two other Numbers, and, under the title of *Long Island Prophecies*, sold for sixpence to Mr. Ricardo or any other of the great statesmen to which the affairs of this miserable nation are now committed. This is the petition:

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

"I BEG leave to represent to "your Honourable House that I "sold out my funded property in "1811 at a loss of 55,000*l.* and "that I laid out 150,000*l.* in land, "in the Counties of Hereford, "Hertford, Essex, Middlesex, "and Southampton.—My Here-"fordshire estate I let in 1811

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"for 1600*l.* a-year, till 1816, and "my rents were remitted punctu- "ally every half year. My farmers "in 1816 complained of great dis- "tress, and I lowered their rents "25*l.* per cent.: but since 1819, "they have not been able to pay "me any rent; alleging, that "they cannot sell the produce of "their farms for what it cost them "to grow it; three of my farmers "have given me notice to quit, "and I have been obliged to cut "down timber to pay the land- "tax, poor's rates, and other "taxes.—My Essex farm I let at "a corn rent in 1811, and the "price of wheat then was sixteen "shillings a bushel, but has been "lowering ever since; and in "1819, my tenant ran away in "my debt a year's rent and has "become a bankrupt. The farm "has been in my hands three "years, and I have never been "able to repay myself the money "paid for labour by the sale of the "produce.—This is exactly the "case too with my Hertfordshire "estate, which I have farmed these "eleven years, and the expense "of cultivation was greater than "the produce fetched at market. "As I found my expenses so "great, I have been obliged "to dismiss twenty labourers "since Christmas last, and can- "not afford to employ them "again, as my hay and wheat, "and beans and oats, do not "fetch at market so much as they "cost me growing; and I have "lowered the wages of the la- "bourers I retain to eight shil- "lings a-week, instead of twelve "shillings and fourteen shillings, "which I have paid for some "years past.—These losses have "obliged me to offer my estates "for sale, and I cannot get more "than one-half for them; say, "75,000*l.*; for which I paid "150,000*l.*: I have a mortgage "on these estates of 60,000*l.*, and "the mortgagee has given me "notice to foreclose. Leaving me "only 15,000*l.*, out of 150,000*l.* "By my father's Will, I have "1000*l.* a-year legacies to pay to "his twenty-three grandchildren, "and shall have only 15,000*l.* to "do it with, instead of 150,000*l.* "which my father and I were "actually worth in 1811, when "we bought these estates, and "the purposes of his Will cannot "be complied with.—I attribute "the whole of this distress to the "alteration in the currency; for "when I bought the estates in "1811, the guinea sold for "twenty-seven shillings and the "bank note therefore was *de-* "*preciated six shillings in the*

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"*pound note*, and worth only "*fourteen shillings*. I am now "paying in an improved cur- "rency of 30*l. per cent.* for the "66,000*l.* I owe on mortgage, as "the guinea now is worth only a "one pound note and a shilling, "owing to the twenty millions of "notes withdrawn from the cur- "rency to prepare for pay- "ment in gold.—I beg leave to "suggest therefore, if the cur- "rency is to be altered into a "gold one instead of paper, that "commissioners should be ap- "pointed to apportion all old debts "and make an abatement of 30*l.* "per cent.—If the government "would encrease the circulation "by ten millions of the bank of "England notes, the Country "bankers would issue ten millions "more, and bring the currency "back again to sixty millions, "which is the highest it ever was "at. Prices would again rise, "trade revive, rents be received, "poor's rates lessened, taxes paid, "commerce flourish as it did "during the war, which I con- "ceive was owing entirely to the "sixty millions of currency, which "represented four hundred mil- "lions of annual productions. I "travel a great deal in England, "and I know the Country "bankers all apprehend bank- "ruptcy amongst their cus- "tomers; the forgeries will be on "the Country bankers, and will "oblige them to pay in gold to "escape that forgery, and make "them draw in their accomoda- "tion to the public. If gold pay- "ments are desirable, by putting "alloy in the sovereign, or stamp "twenty-six shillings on the so- "vereign, as was done with dol- "lars during the war; or, have a "gold token worth fourteen shil- "lings stamped twenty shillings, "the gold would not leave the "Country, or be hoarded, which "it is now as soon as it is issued; "for I have been travelling these "four months in England and "have seen only three sovereigns. "I want to see that state of things "when every thing rises instead "of its falling, and ruining mer- "chants, bankers, manufacturers, "landowners, farmers, and trades- "men, throughout the nation; "for with an ample fortune accu- "mulated by great industry of "150,000*l.* I am ruined by the "present diminished currency.— "As a stockholder I was a great "looser for many years, by the "depreciation in money in which "my dividends were paid; and "in which, when I sold the stock, "the money for the same was "also paid to me. Having invested

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"that money in land, and bor-
"rowed sixty thousand pounds
"on mortgage, my ruin has been
"completed by the restoration of
"the currency, which has ren-
"dered my land worth no more
"than the mortgage.—I there-
"fore pray of your Honourable
"House to take my situation into
"your consideration, and oblige

"*Charles A. Thomson.*"

"*Northaw, near Barnet Herts.*
April 18, 1822."

Thus, you see, my Lord, even loss of estate will not open some men's eyes. This gentleman finds that he has lost his estate; but, though he tells you that wheat was sixteen shillings a bushel when he bought it, and though he knows that wheat is not more than five shillings a bushel now, he cannot discover that the gold was depreciated as well as the paper in 1811. And he seems to think that if commissioners were appointed to make an abatement on all old debts of 30 *pounds per cent.* that that would put him to rights. How can that be, when he acknowledges that his estate has fallen in value one-half? If he had read Paper against Gold, and particularly the twenty-fifth Letter of the Series, he would have discovered that the difference was not that of twenty-seven shillings compared with twenty-one shillings, but that of sixteen shillings compared with five shillings. In that work I warned Mr. Horner and the Parliament against acting upon the erroneous idea, that the difference between the price of paper and of gold was the measure of the difference between the price of gold and articles of general consumption. Not I, however, so much as Mr. PAINE, whose authority I brought to strengthen my opinion, and whose clear and beautiful illustration of the subject I quoted.

Mr. Thomson labours along under this great error. He seems to know nothing at all of the extent to which prices may yet fall. To this error it is that we owe the Bill of Mr. Peel; and we owe the error principally to Mr. Ricardo; so that this nation is now tasting the sweets of being under the guidance of Statesmen coming from 'Change Alley. Mr. Thomson is only an instance of that which I mentioned as what would take place. In my Letter to Tierney I said, "a father dies, "leaves his son so and so;" and then I conclude, "there is not "enough to pay the legacies, and "the son is a beggar." This I

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said, be it observed, long before the Bill was brought before Parliament; long before it was extolled by Lord Liverpool and Lord Grenville; long before Mr. Tierney claimed the merit of it for himself and Mr. Horner; long before Mr. Ricardo said that it was the easiest thing in the world to carry into execution; long before Mr. Abercrombie, who is one of the members for the pure borough of *Calne*, congratulated the House upon the Bill; long before Mr. Canning said that this Bill was to set the subject at rest for ever; and while all the radicals in England were, as I told Mr. Tierney, reading this "*trash*;" this twopenny trash, the great Statesmen, as I then told him, too, would be the only persons in the kingdom that would not read it. Here comes Mr. Thomson, now, and tells the Parliament in detail, names the lands and the sums and the legacies, and tells you "what Mr. Cobbett predicted before the Bill was passed has been literally accomplished in my person and estate."

Now, then, suppose Mr. Thomson's prayer to be granted, how is justice to be done him. He can only get back 30 per cent. There is only that abatement that can be made in his favour, even if his prayer were to be granted; whereas a hundred and fifty per cent. an abatement at the rate of the difference between 16 and 5 ought to be made him; and what injustice will it be, if Peel's Bill be repealed; if relief be given to mortgagers not yet ruined, and no relief be given to mortgagers who have already been ruined? This would be partiality indeed; this would be law-making with a vengeance! The weaker part of the community have been destroyed, a law is now proposed to be made to prevent the stronger part from sharing the same fate. The weak landowners are to be suffered to go without any redress; but they having been smashed, the big ones, that is to say, the aristocracy, are to have their estates preserved; the mortgagee is now to be stopped, according to Mr. Western's proposition, before he lay his hands on the estates of those who have had the principal hand in passing the laws which have ruined the small landowner; and I appeal to your Lordship whether any thing more iniquitous and more base than this was ever before heard of.

But, we have not yet a full view of the dastardly iniquity of this proposition; for, if Peel's Bill be now repealed, it will by no

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means place things where they were in 1819; nor where they were in 1813. The effect will be to remove from the Borough-bank all check and all responsibility whatever; to take away all apprehensions of a return to cash-payments, and to send forth a stark-naked blackguard paper-currency, making an old shirt to be worth twice as much as a new coat. Does Mr. Western imagine, that he has the power to contrive the means of prescribing bounds to the quantity of paper-money, other than making that paper payable on demand in gold and silver at some rate or other? If he do, he is the most mistaken of mankind; and if he mean to make it payable in gold and silver; then I can assure him that, putting the gold at twenty pounds an ounce instead of seventy-seven shillings and ten-pence halfpenny, will not answer his purpose. Your Lordship saw, that the moment the Borough-bank saw the most distant prospect of paying in cash, paying in real money, the prices came tumbling down. There was no proportion at all existing, according to which any judgment with regard to prices could be formed. And how can such proportion possibly exist when once the Parliament has enacted, that the Borough-bank shall never again return to cash-payments? We shall, when Mr. Western's proposition is brought forward, hear a great deal about a metallic basis; a great deal about limiting the issues of the Borough-bank; but, as Mr. Vansittart said last year, "*to real cash-payments we "must come now or never.*" I then said that I agreed with him perfectly; but that I thought it would be the *never*, as long as the Borough-bank and Borough-system should last.

It is impossible to limit the extent of the paper, when there is once a certainty that cash-payments can never return. It was the uncertainty, as to this point, that prevented two prices taking place during the war. When this uncertainty shall be removed, there will be no bounds: it will be a declared, and openly avowed bankruptcy; there will be no longer any confidence in any part of the system; paper may be tumbled out 'till the quartern-loaf sell for ten shillings, and until Waterloo receive a twentieth part of the worth of what it now receives.

But let us look a little more minutely into the operation of such a measure. All will be confusion and pell-mell; but let

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in take the tradesman, and the butcher if you like. Of what does the capital of the butcher consist? Of his book-debts; of his bills, which run on for a year, and are generally more than a year in arrear. Repeal Peel's Bill; that is to say, pass an everlasting paper-money Bill, and the butcher will receive about 4*s.* in the pound. This will be the case in all the more laborious kind of trades, such as the smiths, wheelwrights, collar-makers, carpenters, bricklayers, shoemakers, plumbers and others. The bills that they have due to them, and these bills generally represent all that they are worth in the world, will be reduced to next to nothing. This description of persons will be *ruined*; it will be as complete a sponge as was produced by the legal tender in America, in virtue of which men paid debts of a hundred silver dollars, with the paper that was necessary to purchase a pound of beef.

There is another class, too, which Mr. Western seems to overlook, namely, the servant men and maids. They bargained, last Michaelmas, the former, we will say, for eight pounds a-year, and the latter for six. And will the Parliament pass a law to compel these to take a fifth, and perhaps a tenth, of what they have bargained for; or will it make a provision that they shall be paid honestly according to their contract? Who is to say, then, what they shall receive in the paper-money? Who is to say how little or how much; for who is to foresee what that paper-money will be worth? Talk of a violation of good faith, indeed! Here will be such a violation of good faith as never yet, I hope, entered into the mind of man to commit.

The savings-banks, too: millions upon millions, they tell us, have been deposited by servants, by artisans, by labourers, in this sort of way. They have been depositing pretty good money; money, one shilling of which is equal to the purchase of three pounds of meat; and is this money, by Mr. Western's legerdemain, to be changed into money of which it would require five shillings perhaps, or more, to purchase three pounds of meat? I do not accuse Mr. Western of an intention to commit an act of such flagrant robbery, cruelty and tyranny. I think it very far from his disposition to do such a thing; but, if Peel's Bill be repealed, wholly and completely

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repealed, such, I am certain, will be the effect of the measure; because, I again repeat, when once this Bill be repealed, it will become notorious to all the world, and particularly to paper-money makers, that there never can again be any real responsibility attach to the issuing of paper.

Mark, then, the odiousness as well as the injustice of such a proceeding. It will operate exclusively to the benefit of the landowners, and to that of the great landowners, too; because the little ones are already in great part ruined. Mark the turpitude of such a proceeding, the settled, the unequivocal dishonesty of it. Here is the great landlord: he profited during the war from that depreciation of the money, which deducted from the wages of labour, and left the labourer scarcely a sufficiency to drag his miserable carcass to and from the field. He sacked his full share of what was raked together in heaps by the breaking up of the small farmers. He got the war carried on without contributing at all towards its expense. When the peace came, he began to rook out and to pocket the capital of the tenant. And, gracious God! having exhausted that last source, and finding the burthen beginning to fall upon himself, will he now call for a law to enable him to shirk away from that burthen and to rob his tradesmen and his servants and the poor creatures that have been by all sorts of enticements induced to deposit their savings in banks guaranteed by the law?

No, my lord, Mr. Western means no such thing as this! Any thing so cruel and base as this never, I am sure, entered into his mind; but Mr. Western, my Lord, is a person that thinks little, talks much, and acts without due consideration of consequences, notwithstanding the eulogium passed upon his enlightened mind by our profound political philosopher, Lord Castlereagh. Yet, one would think that, after the experience of 1814, 1815, and 1816, when Mr. Western thought that a corn-bill, and even a bill about garden-seeds, would be a protection to agriculture; though he was duly warned of the complete nonsense of all such expectations; one would have thought that, after this experience, he would have thought much, talked little, and moved slowly in matters relating to the currency of the country. However, to pass a Bill, such as he appears to have in contemplation, is clearly impossible, with-

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out the greatest injustice and cruelty that ever was thought of by mortal man. I leave out of the question the chances of such a measure producing *two prices*. I care nothing about foreigners taking the money out of our funds. I care as little about the bilking of fundholders; and contend solely for the injustice that would be done by such a measure to tradesmen, to servants, to artisans, and to labourers.

But then comes the question, Is it possible for the nation to go on, paying in the present currency, the taxes necessary for Jerusalem, Whitehall, the Horse-Guards and Waterloo. I say it is possible; and, according to the doctrine of your Lordship, I say that this ought to be done. I am aware that it will leave nothing for rents or tithes. And I presume that your Lordship's idea extends to this length. For, you say, that the country is not, now, and *is not likely*, to be in a condition, that will make it impossible for it to meet its most solemn engagements, according to existlaws. It is very evident, that, if the whole of the rents and tithes be taken annually, and applied to the purposes before-mentioned, that is to say, to the four branches of expenditure, there will be quite enough to satisfy all the demands of these four branches. At present, the capital of the farmer, and, indeed, of the merchant, the master-manufacturer and the wholesale dealer are bearing a large portion of the burthen. These are, however, fast wearing away; and when they are sufficiently exhausted; that is to say, so much exhausted as to leave only what is absolutely necessary for the mere carrying on of their several concerns, the burthen will settle itself down upon the shoulders of the landlord and the parson; who will have to bear, all the addition made to the taxes since the year 1792. This will certainly absorb all the rent and all the tithes; but this will be only a necessary consequence of a long series of measures of which the landlords and the parsons have approved. It is not for us to enquire whether it will be pleasant or unpleasant to the present owners of lands and tithes; but whether, as your Lordship well observes, it be impossible for the nation to meet its most solemn engagements; and certainly it is not impossible, if it can meet them, by appropriating the rents and the tithes to the payment of what it owes, or what it has engaged to pay. Mr.

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Baring told the landlords to their heads that he saw no reason for the debtor not continuing to pay, *as long as he had any thing to pay with.* Your Lordship must doubtless know Mr. Baring; he is a gentleman that has been in America; that has made loans to other nations as well as this; that was at the Congress of Sovereigns; and that must, of course, understand these matters well.

Now, it is very clear, that, as long as a landlord is receiving one penny of rent, or a parson one sheaf of tithe, each has something *to pay with*; and, therefore, it is not only not impossible for him to pay, but there can be no reason for his not continuing to pay; doctrine which I lay down upon the joint authority of your Lordship and Mr. Baring, who, though now said to be out of the Kingdom, will, doubtless, always be ready to re-assert the justice of this doctrine. The expediency, therefore; the good or the evil, of this continuing to pay, only remains to be considered. Mr. Brougham is of opinion, that continuing to pay to this extent, would *destroy the country.* But what does Mr. Brougham mean by destruction? Will the climate change; will the soil change; will the land cease to produce? Oh, no: the cattle will graze, the birds build their nests and have young ones; the lark and the nightingale will sing, just the same as if rents and tithes were still going on. The number of persons that will suffer will be comparatively few in number; and there can be no reason why we should deem it a deduction from human happiness, though the horse now ridden by the squire's son should prance along under the straddle of a gentleman of Waterloo. These are both men, and it is about a thousand to one that the latter is a handsomer and better-built youth than the former. The number of miserable beings would not be increased; but in all human probability, diminished; for I think it about a thousand to one that, if things go on in the present way, the number of poachers in Thetford gaol will not amount to even the small number of forty.

But, I stand upon the broad ground of your Lordship, namely; that you will be found in your place to resist, to the utmost of your power, any suggestion to reduce the interest of the debt, as long as it is possible to collect the means of paying that debt. It is clear that, as long as there is a penny of rent or a handful of

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tithe unappropriated, unnecessary to, undemanded by, that debt, the impossibility contemplated by you cannot exist; and, therefore, I contend that any measure, tending, directly, or indirectly, to reduce the interest of the debt, is, as your Lordship expresses it, contrary to policy, honour and morality; and that it ought to be branded with the most decided reprobation.

If, indeed, there were, on the part of the landlords, any appearance of a disposition to join the common people in obtaining a Reform of the Parliament, the case would be different; because, then all ranks and degrees; every man in the community, would be giving his assent to whatever might be done; and that which a man assents to cannot be called an act of injustice towards him; but, there appearing to be no disposition of this kind, it never can enter into the mind of any honest man to act in any other way than that laid down by your Lordship, namely, compelling the payment as long as payment is possible, from what source soever that payment may come. What! after having received upwards of twelve hundred thousand pounds out of the taxes, as the Church of England has, for instance, will that Church now say that the law shall be altered, because it calls upon it to give up part of what it has? The landlords also, we shall find upon inquiry, have not been without large receipts from the same source. They perceive, it is to be hoped, that those receipts came out of *borrowed* money; and shall they now, because a heavy demand is made upon their rents, endeavour to shirk out of the interest due upon the loan? They may say, that they are paying too high an interest; but, in such a case, no man is to be judge for himself. He is not to decide of his own head, whether he be paying too much or too little; and, besides, to cut the matter short with all such quibblers, I stand upon the everlasting ground of your Lordship; namely, that the nation is to pay, till it be *impossible* for it to pay any longer.

Before I conclude, my Lord, let me make an observation or two upon what has recently passed upon this subject in the *other place*. Great scolding of Mr. Wyvill because he proposed the taking off of twenty millions of taxes. A good deal of talk about Mr. Western's proposition; but, on the part of nobody any thing positive as to the project for repealing Peel's Bill. This looks

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very suspicious. The Ministers, and particularly Mr. PEEL, himself, have been offering *apologies* for passing the Bill. When praises sink into justifications, and justifications into apologies, the thing in question, be it what it may, is in but a perilous sort of condition. The Bill, having been called an *iniquitous* measure by Mr. Attwood, and this opinion having been cheered by the Opposition, what does Mr. Peel do? Not justify the Bill; not defend the Bill; but cry out against the Opposition for having cheered Mr. ATTWOOD; accuse them of inconsistency; *charge* them with having been for the Bill, claim Saint HORNER and Mr. RICARDO as his associates, or authorities; and, miserable shelter, say that he *gladly* receives reprobation in which Mr. Ricardo is comprehended.

Certainly Mr. Peel's reproach on the Opposition is natural and just; but to what is this great Oxford Scholar come, when he takes shelter under the gaberdine of Mr. RICARDO? He was the great man in 1819; the envied young PITT; a very PITT, No. 2; Sir JOHN SEBRIGHT said that at no moment of his life was he ever so dear to his country. Cheerings and almost huzzaings attended his steps. He could not open his mouth without a *Hear him*. Mr. RICARDO hailed him as a young prophet that had caught the mantle of the prophet PITT. He seemed to be in as great danger from praises, as the beloved Louis, soon after his return to Paris, was in danger of being smothered by "*Vive le Roi.*" The father, who, in the very House itself, told the story of holding the son forth in his arms when a baby, and dedicating him to the service of his country, was hailed as a sort of holy Seer endued with the gift of prophecy; in short, the man must have had no common steadiness of head not to be put absolutely beside himself; and, to say the truth, some parts of his speeches, when we read them now, do seem to have proceeded from a brain not altogether in an unagitated state. And, it is after all this that we find him eager to conjure up the Ghost of Saint HORNER to stand by him; and to cling to Mr. RICARDO as the frightened child clings to the knees of its mother!

Mr. PEEL mentioned Mr. ELLICE particularly, who appears to have partaken in bestowing cheers on Mr. ATTWOOD. He said that that gentleman not only approved of the Bill, but wanted to force it

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into full operation sooner than the Bill itself provided for. This is very true. Mr. ELLICE did do this. Mr. ELLICE even proposed an amendment with this view. And, therefore it was a little hard to hear Mr. ELLICE *cheer* Mr. ATTWOOD when he called the Bill an *iniquitous* measure. Mr. ELLICE endeavoured to get Saint HORNER out of the scrape. I am anxious to have it remembered that I warned Saint HORNER, in Paper against Gold, of the dangers of attempting to pass a Bill like that of Mr. PEEL. Mr. ELLICE pretends that there were more country notes out in 1819 than in 1811. What had this to do with the matter? It was the average price of the bushel of wheat in 1811 compared with that of the bushel of wheat in 1792. This was what Saint HORNER ought to have looked at; and not at the price of the paper compared with the price of the gold. So that this trumpery story about the difference of the quantity of Bank notes out at the two periods of 1811 and 1819; this trumpery defence of Saint HORNER tumbles to pieces in a moment.

Besides, was not the Bill passed with continual praises of Saint HORNER upon the lips of its eulogists? Did not Mr. TIERNEY claim the honour of the Bill to be divided between him and Saint HORNER? Did not Lord GRENVILLE say that the principle of the Bill had been irrefragably established by Mr. HORNER, whose talents were lost to the country, and which loss was never more severely felt than at present! What, then; are we now to be told that the Saint had nothing to do with the matter; and is poor Mr. PEEL to be stripped even of the covering afforded this dead lawyer? He shall not, my Lord, be stripped naked in this sort of way. He shall have your support, my Lord; for you gave your warmest support to the plan as being the means of restoration of the ancient metallic standard of the country.

But what is Mr. ELLICE's own justification? Why, that he really did not foresee the consequences; and he says, that *neither the house nor the country foresaw them.* Indeed! Perhaps Mr. ELLICE does not look upon me as belonging to the country. Be this as it may, I foresaw and foretold all the consequences; and that, too, even before the Bill was passed. This Mr. ELLICE will not disguise. He sits in that seat which by a set of savage ruffians was kept from me. Otherwise the House would not

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have gone on groping in the dark from May 1820 to May 1822, to the ruin and misery of so many hundreds of thousands of persons. I told the rich ruffians of Coventry and the stabbing bloodhounds that they employed, that theirs would be the *suffering* on account of their conduct and not mine. I have lived, thank God, to see many of them suffer; and to see those jolterheaded brutes suffer too, who commanded the miserable slave of a landlord at Merriden to turn me out of his house; because they "*detested the principles of Cobbett.*" The principles of Cobbett would have saved the jolterheaded vagabonds from ruin; ruin, however, which they so richly merited, and from preserving them from which, I seem to have been snatched by a just Providence. I hold it to be *impossible* that the present state of things could have existed, if I had been returned to that House in May 1820. The whole nation; every farmer; every landlord; every merchant; in short, every man in the country would have understood the whole of the matter before the month of July of that year. By speech; by motion; by resolution; by means of one sort and another, I should have made the matter clear as daylight in the space of six weeks. Instead of that, here have we been going on for two years doubting, hesitating, blundering and bothering; and even at last we are arrived at nothing, as far as indoors is concerned, but a confusion of ideas and minds filled with dread and tantalizing anxiety. I, however, am not among the sufferers; the two parties joined in order to crush me; even hypocritical patriots subscribed and canvassed. They got *Peter Moore* and *Edward Ellice*; and *much good may they do them!* Their punishment is precisely what they deserve. They have suffered; but they will suffer a great deal more before they will be an object of pity with any just man.

My Lord, it has become fashionable; it has become a perfect fashion for the Ministers to take shelter under the wings of Mr. RICARDO. The other day, Lord CASTLEREAGH cited him as an authority, the "highest authority," for the opinion, that the taking off of taxes would not tend to the relief of the national distress; and now Mr. PEEL cites him as an authority for the wisdom; or, rather, in the way of apology for his Bill. Mr. JAMES, in a late debate told Mr. RICARDO about his having at one time said that Peel's

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Bill would have an effect on prices only to the amount of *three* per cent.; and, at another time, only to the amount of ten per cent. Mr. RICARDO did not positively deny that he had said these things, but asked Mr. JAMES to point out when he had said them. The latter, that is to say, the ten per cent. story, has been told during the present session; and the three per cent. story was told in the House of Commons on the 24th of May, 1819. Lord GRENVILLE, on the authority of Mr. RICARDO, I believe, said the same thing in the House of Lords on the 21st of the same month, in May. This profound Statesman said that his opinion was, that cash payments might have been safely resumed *at the end of the year* 1819. Mr. BILLICE actually made a motion, which, if it had passed, would have brought the thing to issue at this very moment! For that resolution was, that the Borough Bank notes should be no where a legal tender *after the first of May* 1822, instead of 1823! And now this Member for Coventry, whose ruffian supporters stabbed those with knives who came to vote for me; this Member for Coventry, who, with his worthy colleague, Peter Moore, represented me as a revolutionist, and as an associate with those whom he called the Cato Street Gang; this surprising Member for Coventry now tells the House, that he is "free to confess that he did not "see the extent of the conse-"quences of the Bill, otherwise "he should have *paused* before "he gave it his approbation." *Pause!* What does he mean by *pause* before he gave approbation? Why, he was a learned Doctor upon the occasion, he proposed to accelerate the measure by a year. If he did not see the consequences, I did see them. I had told him the consequences beforehand; and he ought to have believed me; at any rate, he ought now to resign his seat, and to request the rich ruffians to put me in his place.

Out of all this, naturally arises the question to Mr. WESTERN; "Do you think, Sir, that there will "be no shame, no disgrace, no "intolerable infamy, attached to "the repealing of this Bill?" Is it to be imagined, my Lord, that, if there be paper and ink to be found in England, I shall suffer this Bill to be repealed, without posting up, in all manner of ways, the wise observations of those who took a part in the memorable discussions? No. I remember too well the being prevented from

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entering Manchester; I remember too well the drawing forth of horse, foot and artillery, and the deed which was so manifestly premeditated by those who drew them forth. I remember too well the imprisonment of JOHN HAYES for two weeks, for going round the town of Bolton to tell his neighbours that I was arrived at Liverpool in good health. I remember too well the conduct of Lord Aylesford and the Yeomanry at Merriden. And above all things, I remember too well, the language made use of by Canning, Mackintosh, Brougham and Scarlett during the season of Six Acts; and the provisions of those acts, too, which abolished cheap publications, which loaded my writings with paper and with price, and which encouraged the grinning foe to conclude that *now* "the *torch* was extinguished for ever."

I remember all this too well to suffer this Bill to be repealed without making the transaction as notorious and as marked as any festival of the church. Had not I returned, the thing would have been done long ago. Had Six Acts extinguished the torch, it would still have been done as quietly as the passing of a Bill to regulate the driving of coaches or the smoking of chimneys. Now it must be notorious, now it must be marked; now it must be watched, commented on, exposed, laid bare; stripped of all sorts of disguise, and placed before the world in all its ridiculous deformity.

Sufferings! Distress! What suffering, what distress, what torment can be too great for those who have persecuted me? And who, by all sorts of perfidies and all sorts of violences, have endeavoured to degrade and destroy me? The labouring classes suffer *less* than they did; and I knew they would suffer less. Where I used to meet twenty beggars, I do not now meet one. I hear from all quarters of England, that the labourers now get *some meat* to eat. And as for the rest, let them get out of the scrape as they can. I will not deprive myself of the pleasure of saying, that I enjoy the confusion of my foes. Many a time have I said, "I will mock when their fear cometh." Mock I do; and mock I will; and, whether your Lordship believe it or not, there are hundreds of thousands that mock along with me.

I despise the knave, who affects to say, that I rejoice at the *ruin of my country*. I have always been singularly faithful to that

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country. But by country I do not mean Bank notes, paper money, paper money makers, licensing public houses, (though by Parson Magistrates,) new game laws, and burgage tenures. I do not call these *my country*. And I can perceive danger to nothing but things of this sort. These things removed—These things, and things like these, and I shall feel anxious about all that remains; but I should be a hypocrite indeed, to pretend to be anxious for the preservation of these things; and should be a miserable slave if I refrained from expressing my pleasure at witnessing that which I believe will put an end to them.

A few months, nay a few weeks, will settle one or two great points involved in that "*crisis*" at which Lord CASTLEREAGH says we are arrived. Neither repeal of Peel's Bill, nor any other measure, can save the Borough system for any length of time. The only way of settling the nation is to abolish that system. Of this I am perfectly convinced; and if it be not abolished, the consequences will remain with those who prevent the abolition. The transfer of estates will, I imagine, be amongst the very smallest of those consequences. The man who would aid the landlords in reducing the interest of the Debt, whether by direct or indirect means, without reform of the parliament, as a previous, or, at least, a concurrent measure, must be a villain, deserving universal execration. To repeal Peel's Bill is an indirect and most flagitious way to reduce the interest of the Debt. To such a measure, therefore, I shall offer all the opposition, all the resistance, afforded by my limited means; and I stand upon the authority of your Lordship, ready to "*brand* with reprobation" every attempt to reduce that interest, as long as there is any "*possibility*" of paying it in full, with the thorough conviction upon my mind, that it is both possible, feasible and facile to pay it in full, though there be a total cessation of the paying of rent and of the yielding of tithe. I am,

Your Lordship's
Most obedient and
Most humble Servant,
WM. COBBETT.

P. S. Since writing the above, I have heard what leads me to suppose, that the Ministers will not attempt even their own proposed partial repeal of *Peel's Bill*. And, certainly, as *no reform is intended*, that Bill ought, in justice, to

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go into full effect. A "*Staffordshire Mine Adventurer*" has addressed a letter to Mr. *Littleton*, vehemently calling for a return to what he calls the *standard of the war*; that is to say, a vile paper-money that would *rob the labourer anew*, and do so many acts of injustice. He cites the losses of *Mortgagees*; but, many of them are *sold up*; and why not go on and finish the job? This writer, though a *mine-adventurer*, does not go very *deep* into the matter. He thinks that *civil war* will be the consequence of *pushing on* the Bill of Peel. I think civil war much more likely to be produced by repealing the Bill; for, by the repeal, *the millions* will be robbed and brought to the verge of starvation; and, the very large number of persons, included under the heads of *Waterloo* and the *Horse-Guards* (by no means the least fit *for war*) will suffer great robbery too by the repeal. It is a great deal of difference to an officer, and especially to a private soldier, whether his shilling will buy him *four* pounds of meat, or *one* pound. It would, in fact, be a most flagrant robbery of our gallant defenders, because the rate of their pay is *fixed*. The labourer may raise his weekly wages something; the loss on his yearly wages can be only for a year; but the soldier's pay is *reduced for his whole length of service*; and would not this be a most infamous breach of faith? Enlist him to be paid in good *hard money*, and pay him in *paper*? Civil war indeed! Here is something like a danger of civil war.

This writer is afraid, that, at last, some of the ruined men amongst *the higher classes* will take the lead, and put themselves at *the head of the people*. For what? To *lower wages in proportion to the price of food*! They will, perhaps, stir up the regular soldiers to *mutiny for a reduction of pay!* For a lessening of the number of their pots of beer and pipes of tobacco! My lord, I know soldiers well; and beg leave to assure this Staffordshire Mine-Adventurer, that he may, if he can make shift to pay his mortgagee, rest perfectly tranquil on this score. Amongst the miners he *may*, possibly, find men who want less pots and tobacco than they get; but amongst our cloth, he will never find one. What would a parcel of soldiers say to a ruined Miner or Landowner, who told them his dismal tale? Why, seeing him destitute, they would (if young and able),

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tell him to *'list!* And, if old, they would give him a drink of beer and drink with him, 'till the drum beat; and then they would run away bidding him farewell.

Oh no! The thing will not work in this way. The losers of estates and capital go off *quietly*, one by one. They have no means of combining for any purpose whatever. Their very poverty enfeebles them. They are in the hands of the class that is gaining, and cannot stir an inch. Nor will the transfer of property, real or personal tend, to create the smallest resistance to the government. The Horse-Guards are pleased, Whitehall is pleased, Waterloo is pleased, Jerusalem is pleased, the Labourers are pleased, the Operatives are pleased; and, who has the government to fear? The *Landlords and Parsons?* Poh!

Besides, though, at present, there is a *struggle* between these latter and the *Labourers*, there will be none soon. The struggle arises from this: that the Landlords and Parsons wish to get their *shares*, and this they cannot have and the labourers have their share too, unless Whitehall and the other classes go unpaid. When, therefore, things shall have settled themselves down a little, and the landlords and parsons shall, by degrees, have given up their shares, there will be no *struggle;* and I can see no reason to apprehend any kind of opposition to the government during the whole of this process of transfer.

The writer, to whom I have just alluded, is shocked at the idea of "escorting a colony from "'Change Alley to lord it over "the deserted mansions of the "children of those *patriots and* "*heroes*, who erected the noble "fabric of the British Consti-"tution." Fine sentiments for a Mine Adventurer! But, he is *warm;* and a little out of his head too perhaps. These are the children of those who erected the "noble fabric" of the *Septennial Parliaments*, of the *Riot Act*, and of the *Debt* itself, which has been the keystone of the whole; and the "Children" themselves have erected the "noble fabric" of the combination laws, the new game-laws, the printing-press laws, and Six-Acts. This being the case, and *all reform being opposed and rejected with disdain by "the Children,"* I am, like your Lordship, for enforcing "*existing laws*," and, like Mr. Baring, for making "the Children "pay *as long as they have any* "*thing to pay with.*"

This writer, whom I guess to be a gentleman near Birmingham, and who publishes in that town, exclaims: "*Transfer* this *beau-*"*tiful Island* to *Dutch* and *Ger-*"*man* Jews." The *beautifulness* of the Island is something, to be sure; and Jews are *Jews* to be sure; but, as to *Dutch* and *German:* O, fie! When he must know that "the *patriots* and *he-roes*" of whom he speaks brought over a *Dutch* king to *deliver* us; and, when he must also know, the present illustrious reigning family came from *Germany*, and always marry Germans. O, fie! Sir, I think, that the circumstance of the Jews being *Dutch* and *German* is a great recommendation to them. Some of our greatest men, besides the Royal Family, are of this descent. There are the *Barings*, for instance, who boast that

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they sprang from the *Dutch*, and say that their true name is *Bering*, and that we English have corrupted it. But, does this gentleman forget, that almost all the children of the "*patriots* and *heroes*" take great care to have it recorded, that their ancestors were *French*, and "*came in with the Conqueror?*"

This *national* objection to the Jews is, then, none at all. What Jew can be, in any respect, more contemptible than the *Norfolk Numskull*. No Jew can be more mean, and certainly no Jew was ever so foolish. And, as to their being Jews, the Jews are quiet people; and, though they love money, we shall hardly experience any disadvantage in the *change* even in that respect, while, in many other respects, we must be great gainers. Let the Jew, therefore, *have his bond;* or, *let us have reform.*

TO MR. HUME,

On his Speech with regard to the Newspapers.

Kensington, May 13, 1822.

SIR—That your *puff* for the *Old Times* newspaper was a *real* puff, that is to say, *not true*, the *Morning Chronicle* has clearly shown. But, this is not all. You have furnished the base, *trading Association* with the means of hatching falshoods and indulging in their malignity. You have made *common cause* with this, the vilest of all printing concerns that ever was heard of. Others may be shy upon this subject. I shall not. I have always been on the *reserve* with regard to commendations on your public conduct. I have always remembered that you have *been in the East Indies*, and that you belong to that *Grand Scotch concern*, the East India Company. I have always viewed you in connexion with this THING No. 2, which is by no means inferior, in any one quality, to the THING No. 1. I could not see, how it was possible for a man to hate No. 1, and love No. 2. Nor could I, for the life of me, discover, how a man could be reasonably anxious to reduce the expenses of the army and ordnance and staff, or (to use one word expressive of the whole of the *fighting concern*) the expenses of *Waterloo;* I could not perceive how a man could be anxious to reduce the expenses of *Waterloo*, while he was for paying *two millions and a half to No. 2*, while that No. 2 *owes the nation about* 20 *or* 30 *millions of money*, agreeably to a bargain contained in, and making part of an Act of Parliament!

However, of this matter I shall say more another time. At present I have to talk to you about the *trading concern* that you have recently puffed off. The *Traders* have always been greatly annoyed by me.—I have disturbed them in their trade; exposed the baseness of their traffic; for, like Baalam, they have wanted to have *character* and *profit* too. And now you will see what *use* they have made of the puffing materials with which you have furnished them. In their paper of Saturday last, they published the following: "We observe by "the return of stamps purchased "by newspapers, that *Cobbett's* "*Political Register* only con- "sumes 825, *about sixteen a* "*week, for the country.* This "is the state to which his stupi-

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"dity, blunders, falsehood, and "contradictions have *reduced* him! "This should be a *warning* to "him, if he be not too old to "mend: but, in truth, we sus"pect there is nothing left in him, "or of him, to improve."—The facts are these: the *figures*, here stated from the Stamp-office return, represent, according to that return, so *wisely* obtained by *Lord John Russell*, the number of *stamped* Registers only; but, then, the return is for the *whole* of the year 1821, whereas the stamped Register (published in that way merely for the convenience of gentlemen who could not get the unstamped one in reasonable time) was not begun till *late in that year*. Then again, the stamps for the Register never were had but *one week* from the *Stamp Office*. They have always, except for that once, been had from a *Stationer*, this being, in such a case as that of the Register, the most convenient mode, the least troublesome, and, upon the whole, the least expensive. The return, as to *comparative numbers*, *is totally false*; for, many of the newspapers are, occasionally at least, supplied with stamped paper *by the Stationers*, who, be it observed, takes out the stamps *in the name of any paper that they choose!* The Stamp-office people care nothing about this. All they have to look to is, that they get the money for all the stamps they issue. It is clear, that the stamps for the Register, except the first and only parcel, which was got directly from the Stamp-office by the publisher of the Register, have been taken out *in the name of some other paper*; and, as far as I know, in the name of the *Trader itself!* So, here is a pretty "*return!*" There is a fine piece of *information*; a glorious proof of "*increased knowledge*" for Lord John Russell to lay before the country, and for you to build a puff upon!

The *Constant Trader* has an office, a separate office, for *supplying* many of the Country-papers with *news!* Who knows, whether those papers may not get their *stamps* (as all go from London) through the same channel; and that, thus, part of their numbers too are given, in this "*return*," to the *Constant Trader*? You may say, that you do not believe this to be the case; I do believe it; and the public when it sees all the *other tricks* that these traders play, will, at any rate, hesitate long before they will join you in opinion. For what are not those capable of, who, well knowing all the facts that I have stated, can put upon paper a paragraph like that which I have inserted above? And what must they think of their own readers, when they can tell them, that "*only sixteen Registers a week go to the country?*" There are, stamped and unstamped, many more Registers printed on the one day of the week than there are *Old Times* newspapers; a great many more; and, as to the number of persons that the Register is *read* by, they are, perhaps, *fifty to one*, compared with those of the Constant Trader. The Statesman is very fast gaining ground upon the Constant Trader; and, as to *advertisements* (which was the point you were poking at), an advertisement, except relating to *tall* footmen, and to young women with *fresh breasts of milk*, who want "situations" in families of "steady habits" where "men

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"servants are kept"; I repeat, that, with exceptions of this sort, an advertisement in the *Morning Chronicle* is worth ten advertisements in the Constant Trader. And an advertisement in THE STATESMAN is worth, probably, at this time, nearly as much as in the *Chronicle;* because the paper is *read* with attention; and *read* too, by persons who understand what they read. It passes through the hands of a much greater number of intelligent persons than the Constant Trader does. And, to be sure it must; for what *interest* can men of sense take in a publication like the *Trader*, which tells you nothing (as to the important concerns of the nation) of what has been done, what is doing, or what is intended to be done, or what about to be done! The wretched thing is always waiting to see (as it did in the case of the Queen) "which way the cat jumps," in order that it may *jump the same way*. At this very moment, it is back upon its haunches, sadly puzzled to know what to do. It does not know whether to take part with *fundlords* or *landlords*; with Mr. *Western* or Mr. *Peel*. Let the public *watch* the Trader a little, and it will see the tricks that it will play. It offers *no opinion of its own* upon any important question, till the public has *decided;* and then it falls in and tears the thing to rags; makes such a *botheration* about it, that men who have led the way begin to fear that they are in the wrong.

Mr. HUTCHINSON made, and in Parliament too, the weak (to give it the mildest epithet) observation, that this paper "generally *succeeded* in what it *undertook!*" It *undertakes* nothing but to jump with the cat. You, Peter Moore, Sir Robert Wilson, Mr. Hobhouse and some others, backed by the Constant Trader, *undertook* to get the Queen *crowned!* The Constant Trader put forth an unusual quantity of bombast. The *result* showed what its *undertakings* are. Foolish men, and only very foolish men, ascribed to it the triumph of the Queen, which was wholly due to others. They thought, that *all* they wanted was to have *the Trader on their side*. Loss of life to the unfortunate Queen was the consequence!

It appeared to me, at the time, something very curious that the Constant Trader should be puffing you off at the very moment that it expressed its joy at the conviction of Major Cartwright and Mr. Wooller, a time when you were very intimate with Major Cartwright. There was no man in the country of common feeling that was not sorry for that conviction; and, how you came to be puffed off in so gross a manner, in the Trader, while the Trader was expressing its joy at that result, did appear something very unaccountable to me. The puffs were manifestly not of the fabric of the Trader itself; they manifestly came from another hand; and this thing staggered me so much, that I could not help observing, when I first read about the barrel of cyder, that I wished the honest fellows of Herefordshire might not get laughed at in the end. But, how am I to account for the Constant Trader having been able *some months ago* to discover that an *independent* Member of Parliament would bring forward the question of Government advertisements? How am I to account for this wonder-

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ful knowledge in the Trader? I had represented the Trader as sinking; and the Trader observed, thereupon, "we shall see by-"and-by, whether we are sink-"ing, if some independent Mem-"ber of Parliament *should make* "*a motion* respecting Govern-"ment advertisements." And now, out comes this famous humbugging exhibition. Here is a *false* return. Not false as coming from the Commissioners of Stamps. True as far as regards them; but totally false as regards the comparative numbers of the different publications. A thing apparently *cooked up;* artfully contrived to give a false representation of numbers, particularly as far as relates to the Constant Trader and the Register. The object of the whole thing appears to have been to puff forth the former and to run down the latter. But, the clumsiness with which it has been managed has totally defeated this object, and has made the mischief fall upon the heads of the contrivers.

There are persons who think Sir, that it would be better for you firmly to stick to some one tangible matter and to *carry it through*, and not to skip about and to be a perfect *At-All* in politics. The Ordnance was a great affair. It was not half done; half finished. it was not developed as it ought to have been. It was not laid before the country in a clear and distinct form. In short, there was more of annoyance to the Ministers in it (dropped as it was) than there was of benefit to the country. You should have showed, in my opinion, what sum of money could have been saved upon the whole; and not have laid hold of things in detached parts, each too insignificant to command much attention.

There are those who think, and I am one of them, that we do not stand in need of additional financiers at this moment; but, that we want men who are decidedly for taking off taxes, as the sole means of relieving the country. And I, for my own part, cannot reconcile with views of this sort, your very anxious desire to procure an invitation for Mr. Ricardo to be at Hereford, a gentleman whom Lord Castlereagh cites as an authority for the doctrine, that taking off taxes is not the way to relieve the country. I thus plainly give you my opinions, and if they have been called forth by your puffing exhibition, that circumstance does not tend to render them less worthy of attention. In one word, what the country wants is, not men to annoy the Ministers, but men to produce a reduction of taxation and relief from the present universal distress. For all the good you have done, no one is more grateful than myself; but, at the same time, I must not shut my eyes to the mischief that you have endeavoured to do, by puffing off a publication which has always been the enemy of the liberties of the country, and, whenever its own immediate interest prescribed it, the strenuous advocate for the shedding of innocent blood.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
WM. COBBETT.

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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TO

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT,

BART.

On the Injustice, on the part of Landlords, in holding Tenants to their Leases under the present circumstances.

Worth, Sussex, 22 May 1822.

SIR,

THE subject above-stated is one of great importance; many families are deeply interested in it; you are one of the parties, and, in treating of it, I address myself to you, because you are not only one of the great landlords of the country, but have much to do with the matter in a point of view which is somewhat peculiar, and which will be mentioned before I come to the close of this Letter.

It is, as I have frequently had to observe, very well worthy of great attention, that the landlords never discovered any uneasiness on account of the sufferings of the country, till they began to suffer themselves. For about twenty years they saw the miseries of the labouring classes increase in an enormous degree. They saw the persons destitute of a sufficiency of food and raiment increase in number four fold. What were the thoughts which this heart-rending circumstance awakened in their minds? What thoughts *ought* it to have awakened? Why, certainly, very anxious thoughts about means to put a stop to the increase of degradation. Thoughts about the *causes* which had produced the increase. But, the thoughts that were awakened were such only as tended to schemes for *punishing* the unfortunate parties; for preventing them from obtaining, out of the products of their labour, even enough to sustain life. It was, at the end of three hundred years, discovered, that the law which provided for the feeding of those, who were unable to obtain food, had been *misinterpreted*. Select Vestries were enacted, in order to place the power of giving relief solely in the hands

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of the rich. The inhuman project of *Malthus*, that project, insulting to human nature itself, was cherished by the landlords (including parsons) all over the kingdom. I never knew, and I never heard of, a landlord that did not approve of that abominable project. The name of *pauper* was given to every one, who, cut off in his wages, was compelled to obtain an addition to his food in the shape of relief. The labourers were called lazy, drunken and profligate, and shoals of fanatics, or impostors, were encouraged to beset them in order to keep them *quiet* in a state of half-starvation.

Nothing can overact the plain fact, that, during about twenty-five years the labouring classes were *suffering great and increasing misery*. This is *proved* by the increase of the pauper-list. This is undeniable. And yet, the word "*distress*" was never heard from the landlords, during the whole of that long period! Two hundred or three hundred small farm-houses were stripped of their goods and stock; half a million of happy people were thus made paupers; all sorts of schemes were resorted to for keeping the toiling race alive for the purpose of toil; Scotch Herrings, Cornish Pilchards, Old Bones stewed, Soup-shops; but, never a word about "national *distress*," any more than if earwigs or cock-roaches had been the sufferers. That base and abominable scheme for feeding the labourers with *potatoes* was resorted to. "A *potato-ground*" was allotted to the "*peasant*" in a country of "*roast beef*," where the rascally root of slavery had, in this way, never been known before, and where, until now, nobody had ever had the insolence to use the word "*peasantry*" as applied to any portion of our people; this word meaning, not merely "*country-people*," but a *distinct cast*, hereditarily of character inferior to the owners of the soil. All this was going on for twenty-five years; and not a word did we hear from the landlords about "*Agricultural Distress*," though amongst those who really carried on the Agriculture, the misery was so great and so steadily increasing.

Nay, when any part of the people, goaded by their sufferings, attempted, no matter by what means, gentle or violent, to obtain *relief*, they were accused of the most wicked motives; their distress was *denied*; they were charged with making it a *false* pretence for their "*seditious*" conduct; and, invariably, when any change

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in the conduct of the Government and Parliament was prayed for, those who put up the prayer were told to look at "the *prosperity* of the country."

All this is well worthy of being remembered now that these same *Landlords* have begun to talk of "*distress.*" They manage the thing pretty artfully, however; for, they have not, as yet, talked much of *their own* distress. They always talk of the *tenants*. It is the *farmers* that they affect to feel for. They keep *themselves* out of sight. But he must be a shallow man indeed, who does not perceive, that it is for themselves, and for themselves only, that they care. Some of them have *lowered their rents;* but, in what degree? And, is it not manifest, that *no degree* will be sufficient to save the tenant? Is it not manifest, that, even if he pay no rent at all, the tenant, in nineteen cases out of twenty, must be ruined, if compelled to make good any contract entered into only a year ago; or even now, if he contract to pay any rent at all?

The proposition that I am about to maintain, is this: *that it is unjust in any landlord to hold a tenant, under present circumstances, to any contract for payment of rent of land.* I am speaking of *farming*-land all course. I do not put any limit to the duration of the lease; for, though the lease may have been taken only yesterday, it is impossible, that any man can have taken a farm with the intention to *lose* by it. Every tenant in the kingdom, without a single exception, ought to be released by the Court of Chancery from the obligations of his lease. No tenant *can possibly* have seen, or thought of, what he was really doing when he contracted to pay rent for the use of a farm in this kingdom at this time; and, as the casualty which has arisen *could not possibly* be in his contemplation when he made the contract, the contract is not binding in *conscience*, and ought not to be binding in *law*.

It was not only the passing of *Peel's Bill* that caused this casualty. The cause has been at work from 1814 to the present day. All that time the landlords have been gaining enormously at the expense of the tenants. For, though leases may, for the greater part, have expired since that time, the tenant has constantly been losing. No abatement of rent has been able to compensate for the fall of price, which, with the exception of a part of 1817 and

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1818, has been regular and constant. Tenants at *will* even have had, in most cases, no means of saving themselves. Ignorant of these causes that were at work, they have been the dupes of the landlords. Every thing (with the trifling exception of my efforts) that they have heard and read has had a direct tendency, and, in general, was intended, to *delude* and to *plunder* them.

This has been a glorious season for the landlords. These latter (now that they begin to see their *own* danger) frequently talk of the *gains* of the fundholder, the pensioner, the placeman, and the like. But, have these gained, since 1814, in a greater proportion than the *landlord?* If the fundholder, for instance, has received two or three bushels of wheat for one, has not the landlord received in precisely the same proportion? The landlords are *now*, indeed, crying out; but, is it not because they see that they have nearly exhausted the means out of which these their unjust gains have come? They are now talking of having an interest *in common* with their tenants. They are now talking of *standing or falling* with them. They did not talk thus only eight months ago; and, let them say what they will, this new language of theirs is merely intended to lead the tenants along till they have gotten from them the very last shilling that they possess. The way to stand or fall with the tenants is to demand *no rent* from them. Otherwise it is standing on the part of the landlord and falling on the part of the tenant. And, it is my business now to show, that it is *unjust*, on the part of the landlords, to attempt to hold the tenants to their leases; that these latter ought to be released by law or equity; and, if not so relieved, they are left by honour and conscience at full liberty to relieve, or protect, themselves, in the best way that they can discover.

In my Register of April 6, I related the case of a tenant, who, unable to obtain an abatement of rent from his landlord, had sold *off his stock*, and quitted the farm *and the country*. In a subsequent Register, I related the case of Mr. Thomas Smith, who had done the same thing, without asking an abatement of rent, merely upon finding, that the landlord was not disposed to release him from his engagements altogether. I justified Mr. Smith; and, upon this ground; that if any thing arose, no matter what, which *could not have been in the contemplation of*

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the parties, at the time of making the contract, and if this thing, no matter what it might be, prevented either of the parties fulfilling the contract, *without great and manifest injury to himself*; then the contract was void in conscience; it became no longer a contract; for it became a thing which the parties never intended it to be.

Having stated this pretty clearly, and having thereby brought upon me the attack of the NORFOLK NUMPSKULL, who represented me as a man *having no regard to the rights of property*, I am not a little pleased at being able to produce *authorities*, legal as well as moral, in support of my doctrine,—a doctrine however, with regard to the soundness of which I never yet heard an attempt at an argument, except on the part of *Shylock* himself, and on that of *one other person*, to whom I shall, by-and-by, more particularly allude.

The *authorities*, to which I have alluded, I find cited in a pamphlet, just published with the following title. "A Letter to the "Right Honourable the Earl of "Eldon, on the present state of "the Agricultural *Lessees*, and "*their right to relief from the* "*payment of rent*. BY A BARRISTER." The title of this pamphlet speaks its object. It professes to prove, and does clearly prove, that the Lord Chancellor ought to give the Lessees relief; and the author, though he goes more learnedly to work, rests his opinion upon precisely the *same principle* as that on which I defended the conduct of Mr. Thomas Smith.

This writer considers a lease, or contract between landlord and tenant, as imparting to the tenant three things: the *occupation*; the *use*; and the *profit*; and he contends, that, if the farmer of the present day have, by the means of an *extraordinary casualty*, been deprived of either of these, he is, on relinquishing the farm, entitled to be relieved from the payment of the rent accrued during the time of such privation. By an *extraordinary casualty* is meant, something that scarcely ever happens, and such as cannot reasonably be supposed to have been in the contemplation of the parties at the time when the contract was made.

When a tenant is thus deprived of the occupation by the fault of the landlord, there can be no doubt of his being entitled to relief. The Barrister here quotes *Baron Gilbert* as follows:—"A "rent service (he writes), is some-

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"thing given by way of retribution "to the lessor for the land de- "mised by him to the tenant; and "consequently the lessor's title "to the rent is founded upon this; "that the land demised is enjoyed "by the tenant during the term "included in the contract: for "the tenant can make no return "for a thing he has not. If, there- "fore, the tenant be deprived of "the thing let'en, the obligation to "pay the rent ceases; because "such obligation has its force "only from the consideration, "which was the enjoyment of the "thing demised."*

It is next shown, that it matters not, whether the tenant be deprived of the occupation by the landlord himself *or by the means of others*, or by some accident, such as an *inundation of the sea*. It is sufficient that the tenant has been deprived of the occupation by means so out of all expectation as not to have been within his contemplation at the time of making the contract.

The next authorities cited are *Puffendorf* and *Lord Kames*. "It is manifest (says the former), "when the thing let perishes with- "out the lessee's fault, he is not "obliged to restore it, but, from "that time his rent ceases. For "the title to the rent is founded "upon the presumption that the "thing let will continue in being "during the time for which it has "been let; but if the thing cease "to be, the contract ceases also. "And, upon this was founded the "law of Sesostris the Egyptian "king: That, if the violence of "the river should wash away any "*part of the land*, the tenant's "rent should be proportionably "abated."*

Lord Kames says, "A lease in "its very nature, supposes a sub- "ject possessed by one for the use "of which he pays a yearly sum "to another. The possession and "rent are mutual causes of each "other, and cannot subsist sepa- "rately. Land set in lease hap- "pens to be swallowed up by the "sea: this puts an end to the "lease."†

Thus far (omitting, however, several of the authorities cited) with regard to the *occupation*. The present farmers are not de-

* Gilbert's Treat. of Rents, 145.

* Law of Nature and Nations. Book v. chap. 6. s. 2.

† Lord Kames's Principles of Equity. Vol. i. 332. 3d Ed.

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prived of the occupation; but, the injustice of making a man pay rent for a thing when deprived of the *occupation* of that thing, will be found not to be more manifest than in the second or third case, namely, when he is deprived of the *use* of the thing, or of the *profit* of it.

I shall cite the authorities here without any remarks of my own, till I come to the close of them.

1. "In the case 'Harrison *v.* "Lord North' reported in 1 Ch. "Ca. * in which a house which "had been let to the plaintiff had, "during the lease and the civil "war between Charles I. and the "Parliament, been entered by a "party of the army of the latter "and *converted into an hospital* "for sick and wounded soldiers; "and the lessor had sued the "plaintiff, at law, for the rent ac- "crued during the time while he "was so precluded from the use "and enjoyment of the house, "and the plaintiff had preferred "a bill to the Court of Chancery; "that he might be relieved from "the payment of the rent sued "for; the 'Lord Chancellor' "(says the reporter) 'took time to "advise, but declared, if he could, "he would relieve the plaintiff.'"

"A rather remarkable fact ap- "pears on the report: namely: "that the King, (Charles the Se- "cond) or his advisers, had thought "it reasonable *to remit the ar- "rears of rent due from the les- "sees of crown-lands who had "been embarrassed by the tumultu- "ous proceedings of the civil "war.*"

2. "The tone of conviction in "which Chief Baron Gilbert has "declared his judgment on the "subject immediately under con- "sideration, is not less unequivo- "cal and emphatic than that in "which he has spoken, it may be "remembered, on the subject last "treated." "It seems extremely "reasonable" (he says) that if the "use of the thing be entirely lost "or taken away from the tenant, "the rent ought to be abated or "apportioned; because the title "to the rent is founded upon this "presumption, that the tenant *en- "joys the thing during the con- "tract*; and, therefore, if part "of the land be surrounded or "covered with the sea, this being "the act of God, the tenant shall "not suffer by it: because the "tenant, without his default, wants "the enjoyment of part of the "thing, which was the considera- "tion of his paying the rent; nor

* 93.

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"*has the lesser reason to complain,* "because if the land had been in "his own hands, he must have "lost the benefit of as much as "the sea had covered." *

3. "The rule of the civil law "is almost a paraphrase of the "whole proposition of this argu- "ment.—The covenant which ob- "liges the farmer to pay his rent, "*notwithstanding accidents;* does "not extend to that which may "happen by the hand of man, "such as an *open force*, a *war*, a "*fire*, and other accidents of the "like kind, which no man could "foresee. But, it is to be under- "stood, only, of what falls out "*naturally, through the injury of* "*the weather, and which it is* "reasonable to expect; such as a "frost, an inundation, and other "cases of the like nature." †—"If "without any *extraordinary* acci- "dent, and only through the na- "ture of the land itself, and of "the fruits; or *because* of some "ordinary event, there happens "some loss that is not very consi- "derable; as if the fruits are not "of a good quality, or not in "quantity enough; if *tares* grow- "ing up with the corn *diminish* "*the crop;* if passengers have "done any slight damage to the "fruits; in these cases, and others "of the like nature, the *farmer* "*cannot pretend* any diminution "of his rent for these kinds of "small losses." *

4. "As for these things" (says Puffendorf) "whose produce is "uncertain, as fields, orchards, "vineyards, rivers for fishing, and "such like; as a plentiful produce "is to the benefit of the tenant, "so a bad one is to his loss. Nor "in strictness of justice can he "desire any of the rent to be "abated by reason of a poor har- "vest, especially since the barren- "ness of one year is made up by "the plenty of another; for a good "husbandman is not used to let or "rent such things for one year "only; nor can that common ob- "jection take place here, that no- "body ought to grow rich at an- "other's loss: for the landlord "might urge the same in a plen- "tiful year for the raising the "rent, whom in that case the te- "nant would have no regard to. "For because the produce is more "one year than another, the land- "lord had rather be sure of such "a rent, than depend upon the

* Treatise of Rents, 186.

† Domat. Book 1. Tit. 4. s. 4.

* Domat. Book 1. Tit 1. s. 4. See also the several texts of the Civil Law to the same effect scattered through this title.

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"uncertainty of the season: and "on the other side, the tenant lays "out a certainty for the hopes of "an uncertain gain, for which, if "it fails him, he can blame no-"body but himself. However, "that medium proposed in the "digests may be rightly applied "here. If the produce happen "to perish by floods, or by birds "of prey, or by the *inroads of an* "*enemy*, or by a blight or drought, "the landlord ought to make al-"lowance, and the reason added "is, lest the tenant, besides the "loss of what corn he had sowed, "should be forced to pay the rent "of the ground too, and so bear "a double misfortune. But if the "corn prove bad, and nothing "happen more than ordinary, the "loss is then the tenant's. Where "it appears that this medium con-"sists in a division of the mis-"chances to which the produce is "liable, into ordinary and extra-"ordinary, for if the rent were to "be abated for every little loss, it "would give continual occasion "for impertinent law-suits." *

5. Pothier "Traité du Contrat de louage" contains the following passages.

"The hirer, lessee, or farmer, "is *entitled to a total remission* "of the rent accrued during the "time while the *lessor has been* "*unable to procure for him the* "*use or enjoyment of the thing* "*let.*" *—"The reason of this "principle is, that the contract of "hiring resolves itself into a sort "of contract of *sale of the future* "*produce*, or the future use or "enjoyment, of the thing let; of "which the rent reserved is the "price. Now, for the same rea-"son for which the sale of the "future produce is valid, and that "the price does not become due "until the produce arise, and "create by its existence, the con-"sideration of the contract on the "part of the lessee, one ought to "determine that the rent cannot "have become due while the les-"*see has been unable to have that* "*use and enjoyment of which the* "*rent is the price.*" †—"If the "hirer have not been totally de-"prived of the enjoyment of the "thing hired, but, by an *unexpect-*"*ed accident*, his enjoyment have "undergone a considerable alter-"ation and diminution; he is en-"titled to a *proportionate reduc-*"*tion of the rent* accrued during "the time while his enjoyment

* Law of N. and N. Book 5. c. 6. s. 3.

* Part 3. Chap. 1. Art. 2. s. 2.

† Part 3. Chap. 1. Art. 2. s. 2.

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"has undergone this diminution." * —"According to the principles "proposed in the first paragraph, "whilst a *farmer has been deprived*, "*by a superior force*, of the "power of reaping the produce "of any of the years of his lease, "thus: if *an enemy's force have* "*forayed* all the corn growing on "the land which he holds, or if "all the crops, being still standing, have perished by an *inundation of a river*, a *swarm of locusts*, or by any similar casuality; in all these cases the "farmer is entitled to a remission "of the rent accrued during that "year. And if any of these accidents have caused, not a total, but a considerable loss of the "produce of his farm, he is entitled *to a remission*, although not "all the whole of the rent accrued "yet of a part proportionate to "the loss." †—"To entitle the "farmer to a remission of rent, "it is necessary that the cause of "the loss be a *superior force* "which he had it not in his power "by any caution to avoid. If "therefore by obtaining a protection which, for money, the commander of the enemy's force would, to those who required it, "have afforded; he could have "avoided the forage of his crops; "he is not entitled to a remission "of the rent for the loss which he "might have thus avoided." *—"It is necessary that the accident "which has caused a considerable "loss of the produce be an extraordinary one, and not one of those "ordinary and frequent casualties "to which a farmer ought to have "adverted. For instance; the "lessee of a vineyard is not entitled to a remission of rent for "the loss which a frost, the fall "of the grapes, or a hail-storm, "may have caused; at least not "unless the frost or hail-storm "were to an extraordinary degree, "and have caused a total loss of "the fruit." †

I am not supposing, that these, or any other authorities, will satisfy *English landlords*, who will, cost what it may in human happiness and human life, have a *property even in wild animals*; but, I am quite sure, that here are authorities more than sufficient to satisfy all the rest of mankind. These authorities speak *directly* of the deprivation only of the *use*; but, the implied and necessary de-

* Part 3. Chap. 1. Art. 2. s. 1.
† Part 3. Chap. 1. Art. 2. s. 3.

* Part 3. Chap. 1. Art. 2. s. 3.
† Part 3. Chap. 1. Art. 2. s. 3.

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privation of the *profit* must be understood to be the thing for which the tenant is to receive his remedy; for the *use* is nothing without the *profit*, which is the *object of the use*. A tenant may *occupy* and *use* a farm, and yet may have no *profit* from it; and, if this loss of profit, or deprivation of real utility, arise from *an extraordinary casualty*, all these authorities say, that he is to pay no rent that shall grow due during the effective continuance of that casualty.

The Barrister cites, as to the point of deprivation of profit, a decision of the court of Session of Scotland, from Lord Kames, Vol. 1. p. 332. third edit. "A "salmon fishery, from a part of "one of the banks of the river "Tay, had been let for five years. "It is the habit of that fish to re-"sort to and inhabit the main "streams. At the time of the "lease, and for three years after, "the main stream of the river "flowed through that part of the "channel of the river which was "contiguous to that part of the "bank the fishery from which "had been let; but at the end of "that time the course of the river "changed, and the main stream "began, and during the two last "years continued, to flow on the "opposite side of the river; and "the salmon ceased to resort to "that part of the river in which "the lessees were, under the lease, "entitled to fish, and the fishery "became unprofitable. The les-"sors sued the lessees for pay-"ment of the rent accrued during "the two last years, but the court "adjudged that the *lessees were* "*entitled to be relieved from the* "*payment of the rent sued for.*"

Here there was *occupation* and *use*; but, there was *no profit*. The tenants were in *possession*; there was no *interruption* given to their occupation; they had the *use* of the river; they might have *continued to fish*; and, doubtless, as the Barrister observes, did; but, by an extraordinary casualty, they were deprived of the *profit* of the thing rented; and, on that account, and that account only, they were to be relieved from paying rent. Very justly; for, what was the thing let? The water and the ground on which it ran; yes, but, without the *fishery*, these were nothing; and without the *fish*, there could, in fact, be no right of fishing. Thus, then, deprived of the *profit* of the thing rented, though the deprivation *did not* arise from the fault of the lessor, the contract became no con-

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tract at all: the parties were to stand, as nearly as possible, just as they would have stood, if the contract had never been made.

Now, Sir, let us return to my proposition; namely, *that it is unjust in any landlord to hold a tenant, under present circumstances, to any contract for payment of rent;* and let us see whether this be not completely sustained by the foregoing authorities. These authorities all concur; they all tend to one and the same conclusion; namely, that, if the tenant be deprived of the *profit* of the thing let, by an *extraordinary casualty*, he is to be freed from the payment of rent on giving up the thing let to him. All that we have to settle, then, is, whether the present circumstances of the English farmer present a casualty of that *extraordinary* nature which is required to render these authorities applicable to his case.

The general definition is, a casualty, a something happening, which could not, in the *natural course of things*, have been *in the minds of the parties when the contract was made.* As to instances, the authorities mention part of the land washed away by the *violence of a river;* part of it *swallowed up by the sea*, or *covered by the sea;* the subject of the lease seized on and used by an army in *a civil war;* the land, or part of it, overrun by an *invading army;* the land taken out of the possession of the tenant; or the fruits or profits of it applied to the use of others by a *superior force which he had it not in his power to resist.*

Such are the instances supposed by these authorities Such are the specimens of the casualties that are to be deemed sufficient to bring the principle of exoneration from the payment of rent into activity and to give it complete force. Let us see, then, whether any of them surpass in power of injury to the tenant that casualty which has now happened to the English farmer; and whether any of them can, in any case, be less expected to happen, or less capable of being prevented or resisted.

The casualty which oppresses the English farmer is this, an *arbitrary change in the value of money*, caused by means against which the farmer had no power of resistance. If it had been enacted, that he should sell that portion of produce for *five*, which had long been accustomed to be sold for *fifteen* pieces of money of the same nominal value, the act of

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violence could not have been more arbitrary or more efficient. Can any casualty that the mind of man is capable of conceiving be more injurious to a tenant than this casualty? What can be done by the violence of winds and waves, or by the ravages of war, *more* than take away *all the profit* of the land occupied by the tenant? Nothing that the history of mankind can furnish can do *more* than this. The *use* of the thing rented is wholly taken away by such *arbitrary change* in the value of money; and, as to the *occupation*, though it exists in outward appearance and name, though it has a local being, it is totally destroyed as to all its properties, and is no more the thing contemplated in the lease, than it would be, if, by some convulsion of nature, the land were wholly covered by the sea, or, being rich and deep loam, were changed into sand fit for hour glasses.

And, could this casualty, this arbitrary change in the value of the money, be *foreseen?* Could it be in the contemplation of the parties when the contract was made? Will the landlords insist that, the law having all along provided for cash-payments at *some time or other*, the lease was taken with a *foreknowledge* of what has happened; And that, therefore, this is not a casualty of the kind contemplated by the above-cited authorities? The landlords, above all men in the world, ought to avoid the use of such an argument, seeing that, if good, it is complete in bar against all their claims to a reduction of the interest of the debt, whether by means direct or indirect. But, what truth is there in all this that has been said about the *foreknowledge* of the tenant? There was, indeed, always a *law* in existence for a return to cash-payments; and there is now always a law in existence to compel persons in certain public offices to take the Sacrament according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England; but, has this latter law any *real force?* Is it ever acted upon? Is it not continually set aside, as to its effect, by other laws passed for the express purpose? There is a law *for preventing the existence of large farms;* but, is it ever put in force? There was a law to compel the Clergy to reside; but, when attempted to be *enforced*, was it not *quashed*, and, at last, wholly gotten rid of? The cash-payment law had been, at first, passed for *six weeks;* then for *three months;* then for *seven months;* then for

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the *duration of the then war*; then, when peace came, for a year; then for another year; then (war having come again) till the *next peace*; then (peace having come) for a year, then for *two years* in order to make sure of cash; then for another year; then for *four years*, with, however, a *compulsion to pay in part*.

What tenant, what *farmer*, was to place any reliance on a return to cash-payments in consequence of *laws* like *these*? What ground of dependence was there? And how was a tenant to expect to see any thing of the sort of that which he has seen? Besides, if you go to the *law*, you must take in acts of less authority, but of as much effect, as to the case in question, as the laws themselves. You must take into consideration the declaration of the Parliament in 1811, that the paper was not depreciated, and that a pound-note and a shilling were equal in value to a guinea in gold. You are to take also into view the *assertions of the law-makers*; and what were those assertions? Why, that the change in the value of money would be *insignificant*; that it would not exceed *three per cent.*; that nothing of *mischief* could arise from the change; that a *healthy* currency would be a great blessing; that it would make property *safe* and assure to every man his own. Were these things to have no weight with the people? Could a tenant who read these sayings be upon his guard? Could he *foresee*, could he possibly *anticipate* what has happened any more than the tenants of the fishery in Scotland could *anticipate* that the river would change its course?

But, besides all this, the state of life and probable state of mind of the tenant are to be taken into view. And is it not well known, is it not what must necessarily be, that the far greater part of tenants in husbandry can have had nothing but *experience* to guide them; nothing but what they had seen, heard, and felt for a series of years. They knew not the *causes* that were at work. They only knew, that prices had been such and such, and they saw no reason that they should ever be otherwise. As it were for the express purpose of deluding them to their ruin, paper was issued, and prices puffed up in 1818, *after the first fall* had taken place. What were farmers to gather from this? What, but an opinion, that, notwithstanding any laws, prices would, on an average, be sufficiently high to enable them to pay rents? Nay,

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after the passing of Peel's Bill, and even to this very moment, are they not told by law-makers and by ministers, that the change in the value of the money has not been the cause of the fall of prices! Are they not, up to this very moment, assured, in the most positive terms, that the depression is merely *temporary*; that it arises from *over-production*; that things will come about in such a way as to enable them to pay rent without being ruined, if they will but exercise a *little patience*? With what face, then, can any landlord to pretend, that this state of things, in the which the tenant might have *foreseen*? With what face is he to pretend, that the casualty is not as *extraordinary* as any one of those cited, or supposed, by the foregoing legal authorities!

The best answer that landlords could give to their oppressed tenants; the best proof that they could produce of the possibility of the present casualty being foreseen by the tenants, would be, the fact, that it was foreseen and foretold by me; and that, if the tenants did not read my writings, they *ought* to have read them. But, the reply, doubtless, of the tenants would be, that, compared with the whole mass of periodical publications and pamphlets, mine made not more than about a *thousandth part* in point of bulk and circulation; that almost the the whole of the other nine hundred and ninety-nine parts, have constantly conveyed opinions precisely the opposite of mine; that this great force has, too, been employed to decry my opinions; that more than one act of parliament have been passed to throw odium on and to narrow the circulation of my writings; and, that by both parties in parliament, by justices of the peace, by Tract Societies, and by the parsons, without hardly a single exception, these writings have been held up to the farmers as "*seditious* and *damnable*." The tenants may produce hundreds of instances, in which men have been turned out of rented house and land only because they read my writings; and, as the *landlords* have, at bottom, been the *cause* of all these efforts to keep the tenants in darkness, they ought not to be allowed to plead, that those tenants must have foreseen the casualty because *it was foreseen by me*. It is a notorious fact, that the landlords, in several parts of the country, are now, at this very time, doing all they can, stretching their remaining power to the utmost, to prevent the

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tenants from seeing any of those of my publications which have a tendency to make the tenants see their danger. The offence which I gave to the *Norfolk Nimpshull* was, telling the tenants what they had to expect. Peter Moore and Edward Ellice having prevented me from circulating my warnings in one way; Six Acts having narrowed the circulation in another way; unable to *send* my opinions and warnings to the farmers, I went and *carried* them in person. As far as I could *go* and actually *see* the deluded parties, they are on their guard. I have great pleasure in being assured, that I have saved thousands of families from utter ruin. When I have received this assurance from the mouths of the parties themselves, I have sometimes asked them by what *particular writing* they were saved. Mr. Thomas Smith's son told me, that his father was *decided* by my first Letter to *Mr. Peel*, published the winter before last. That Letter, then, did, at least, send off one considerable family and several thousands of pounds of capital to America, for ever beyond the reach of the claws of "*Boroughmongers*," as you used to call them, but who are now become "the *Gentlemen of England*."

Thousands have certainly been saved in this way; but, after all, how is any individual to make any thing of head against the everlasting delusions of a mass of misrepresentation and falsehood such as that which the press carries about the country, in one shape or another? Therefore, generally speaking, it was impossible for the present tenants to foresee, it is impossible for them even now to foresee, the casualty. It was a thing, so far from being *reasonably expected* by the tenants, that it could never have once entered into their minds. It was such a thing as had *never* before happened. The Lawyers say, as we have seen, that a casualty that shall be deemed sufficient to set aside a contract of this nature, must be a casualty that *scarcely ever happens*; but, here we have a thing that *never happened in the world before*; and, therefore, if this casualty be not sufficient to set aside the contracts that it affects, all the decisions of all these lawyers and publicists are not worth a straw; are all false, and all of no use, though they have been guides for judges and juries for so many years.

But, besides the not being able to *foresee* the casualty, the tenant, in order to be fairly entitled to

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relief from payment, must show, that he has been unable to *prevent the fatal effects* of the casualty. He must show, that no *caution* on his part would have enabled him to avoid those effects; and he must also show, that he had not the power, in case of acts of *force*, to resist the assailant. The plea of a tenant, in England, who should apply for an abatement of rent, on account of his stacks having been consumed by *lightning* would not be good; for such casualties do happen now and then; and, though they very seldom happen, they must be supposed not to be entirely out of the contemplation of the contracting parties. The plea of the tenant would also be bad, even if the casualty were an *extraordinary* one, if he did not, upon its happening, use all the *caution* in his power to prevent its effects; as in the case mentioned by M. POTHIER, if the tenant could have prevented the ravaging of his farm by a sum of money paid to the invading enemy, he is not entitled to a remission of rent for damage that *he might have avoided*. It must also appear, in order to make the tenant's claim good, that the loss, in case of force, has been occasioned by a *superior force*; a force which it is not within the compass of possibility that he should have been able successfully to *resist*; and the instances cited are the inroads and other acts of *armies*.

Now, having seen, that the present casualty is such as *never happened before*, and such as could not have been *foreseen* by, or in the *contemplation* of, the tenant, let me ask the landlords, whether it were such as for the effects of it to have been avoided by any human *caution*, or *resisted* by any force within the reach and at the disposal of the tenant?

Lawyers and Publicists have supposed only such instances as arise from the extraordinary movements of nature, or from the fiercest and most irresistible of human force. It remained for the present age, and for the "envy of "surrounding nations and admi- "ration of the world," to furnish an instance produced by the *laws themselves*; by *statutes*, regularly enacted, and enforced by the authority of the whole of the Government. But, this by no means alters the nature of the case; it by no means weakens the claim of the tenant; and it by no means discards as inapplicable any one of the principles, or instances, before cited.

An instance has been cited which occurred during the *civil*

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[illegible], and M. Pothier supposes a farm ravaged by an *enemy's army*. Now, suppose Cromwell's army, or an enemy's army, had ordered the farmers to sell their wheat at *five* instead of *fifteen* shillings a bushel, which latter had long been the average price, and had not taken possession of the land nor ravaged it. Would not the tenants, in either of these cases, have had a fair claim to an abatement of rent proportionate to the loss sustained in consequence of either of these casualties? Well, then, what difference does it, or can it, make to the tenant, whether he suffer this injury from the command of armies, or from acts of parliament?

To resist the tenant's claim, you must, then, show, that he had the power of *avoiding* or of *resisting*; and, we have only to look at the *source* of the casualty to be convinced, that he had no such power. He had no power to keep up the price of his crops; no power to lessen the demands of the gatherer of taxes and of rates; no power to prevent the parson, or tithe-owner, from taking away a tenth of the crop; no power to do any one thing to prevent the effects of the casualty. And, therefore, his claim to abatement is complete; and, as to the extent of the *abatement*, it can be nothing short of the whole of the rent in every case where there is *no profit* at all arising from the occupation after the rent is *excluded*. For the tenant bargains for *profit* as much as the landlord bargains for rent. If there be nothing left for profit without an abatement of rent, the rent ought to be abated; and if there be nothing left for profit, without taking off the *whole* of the rent, the whole ought to be taken off, upon the tenant giving up the farm to the landlord; for, did it ever yet enter into the minds of any men but English Landlords, that, notwithstanding any casualty however extraordinary, however completely uncontemplated by the contracting parties, the tenant is still to pay rent, agreeably to the letter of the contract, as long as he have any thing to pay with, and until he and his whole family be reduced to absolute want? We have only to add to this Malthus's *refusal of parish relief*, in order to give English Landlords a right, a *legal right*, to rob of the last farthing, to strip stark-naked, and to throw down on the highways to die with hunger the whole of the tenants of the country.

In case of a claim for abatement of rent, on account of an

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extraordinary casualty, it is no answer to the tenant, to allege, or even to prove, that *he has still some property*, that he is not absolutely a *ruined man*. The principles before cited take into view nothing of this sort. Supposing the tenant, notwithstanding his losses by the casualty, to be still a very rich man; suppose his wealth to be so great, that he would be able to continue to pay the full rent to the end of the lease, and, even after that, be a man of wealth. These are considerations that do not at all enter into the law or equity of the case, which is to be decided on according to principles belonging to itself. If, for instance, the occupation of the house of *Harrison* by the rebel troops were (as it probably was) a trifling loss when compared with his general property; or, if the loss of the tenants of the Scotch Fishery were (as it probably was) only a loss of a small part of the whole of their property; if this had been the case in these instances, the decision of the courts would have been wholly unaffected by these circumstances. So that the notion, which landlords (some at least) seem to entertain, that the tenant has no fair claim to abatement as long as he has money, *no matter from what source*, to pay rent with, has no foundation in law or equity, and is, I beg leave to assure them, legitimate only as the offspring of their own greedy and merciless minds.

Nor does law, equity, or reason warrant that other notion now so prevalent amongst landlords; namely, that the tenants are to *share* with them in bearing the loss arising from the extraordinary casualty now under our view. The authorities cited threw the whole of the loss of rent upon the landlord. It is quite sufficient for the tenant, that he lose his *time* and the *use of his capital*, without being compelled to give to the landlord a *part of the capital itself*. His loss from the absence of profits is sufficiently great. The loss has arisen from the existence of the land. If the land had not existed, the tenant could have lost nothing by it. The landlord *may* be *innocent* and even *unconscious* of the *cause* of the tenant's losing his time and the interest of his stock or capital; but, at any rate, the whole of the loss of the rent is to fall on the landlord; who, be it observed, experiences no loss, in this case, *on account of any thing done by the tenant*, or in consequence of having granted the lease; for, as observed in the above cited case,

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by CHIEF BARON GILBERT, "*if* "*the land had remained in his* "*own hands he must have lost the* "*benefit of so much as the sea* "*had covered.*"

The casualty, where it is of an extraordinary nature, is to affect the landlord and not the tenant. PALEY has a passage that comes full to this point. "It is possible," says he, "that an estate or a "house may, during the term of "a lease, be so increased or dimi- "nished in its value, as to be- "come worth much more, or much "less, than the rent agreed to be "paid for it. In some of which "cases it may be doubted, to "whom, of natural right, the "advantage or disadvantage be- "longs. The rule of justice "seems to be this: If the altera- "tion might be expected by the "parties, the hirer must take the "consequence; if it could not, the "owner. An orchard, or a vine- "yard, or a mine, or a fishery, or "a decoy, may this year yield "nothing, or next to nothing, yet "the tenant shall pay his rent; "and if they next year produce "tenfold the usual profit, no more "shall be demanded; because "the produce is in its own nature "precarious, and this variation "might be expected. If an estate "in the fens of Lincolnshire, or "the isle of Ely, be overflowed "with water so as to be incapable "of occupation, the tenant, not- "withstanding, is bound by his "lease; because he entered into "it with a knowledge and fore- "sight of the danger. On the "other hand, if by the irruption "of the sea into a country where "it was never known to have "come before, by the change of "the course of a river, the fall of "a rock, the breaking out of a "volcano, the bursting of a moss, "*the incursions of an enemy*, or "by a *mortal contagion amongst* "*the cattle*; if by means like "these an estate change, or lose "its value, the loss shall *fall upon* "*the owner*; that is, the tenant "shall either be discharged from "his agreement, or be entitled to "an abatement of rent. A house "in London by the building of a "bridge, the opening of a new "road or street, may become of "ten times its former value; and "by contrary causes, may be as "much reduced in value: here "also, as before, *the owner*, not "the hirer, shall be affected by "the alteration. The reason upon "which our determination pro- "ceeds is this: that changes such "as these, *being neither foreseen*, "*nor provided for*, by the con- "tracting parties, form no part

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"or condition of the contract; and "therefore ought to have the same "effect as if no contract at all had "been made, (for none was made "with respect to them,) that is, "ought to fall *upon the owner.*" *

Thus, then, the weight is to fall on the landlord, and the whole of it too. There is nothing said about a sharing of the loss between landlord and tenant; nothing about their standing or falling, sinking or swimming, together. The tenant loses enough in his *time*, and in the *interest* of his stock or capital; and, therefore, the loss of the whole of the rent is to fall on the landlord.

Clear as this matter is, however, in the eye of reason; manifestly just as it is; undeniable as it is, that it is sustained by every kind of authority to which, in such a case, men pay respect; still I am far from supposing that the whole combined will produce any effect upon the hearts of English landlords, who will, I am satisfied, go on wheedling first and distraining afterwards as long as there be a tenant with a shilling left in his pocket and fool enough to part with it. An application has been made to the Court of Chancery by a tenant for relief on the grounds aforestated; that relief was not granted by the Lord Chancellor; no *law* can be expected to be passed on the subject; and, therefore, the only means of relief which the tenant has is such as the hare has when pursued by dogs, namely, *to flee*; or to have recourse to those shifts and evasions, which, in such a case, are necessary and just; because the assailant is not to be moved by any considerations of justice or mercy, and because his power is irresistible. LORD KAMES, as quoted by the author of the excellent pamphlet, to which I have been so much indebted, has not hesitated to pronounce such conduct in landlords "to be *hardly inferior to robbery*;" and, of course, tenants are to deal with them as with powerful robbers: that is to say, to use *all* the means in their power to save the remnant of their property from so rapacious a grasp.

I have here done with the case of the tenants, and shall now beg your attention to another case, in which you and I are more immediately concerned; namely, the case of a person, who has borrowed money on *bond*, and who, by an *extraordinary casualty*, is

* Paley's Moral Philosophy, Vol. I. p. 174. 16th edition.

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deprived of the means of paying the money borrowed. To be plain, I borrowed of you 2,000*l.* in 1812, and 300*l.* in 1816. In 1817, the casualty arose, which I insisted, and still insist, gave me a right, agreeably to every principle of justice, to claim an exemption, and to exempt myself, if possible, from the obligations of that bond. I will say nothing here about the *circumstances under which the money was lent;* I will say nothing about my *offer of a mode, and an effectual one, of payment, at a time when payment was within my power;* I will say nothing of the apparently generous offers, and of most solemn promises of secrecy; I will say nothing of these in this place, though I must another time; but will simply state the case as between persons wholly indifferent.

The money was borrowed in the manner and at the times before described. At the time of the loan I contemplated the advantage to me of the use of the money, and you, the advantage to you of the interest to be received. You were money-lender I money-borrower. It was understood, of course, that, in order to your being repaid, the *community was to remain.* That there was to be no dissolution of that; for, it never could be meant, that I was to run all the risks even of civil commotion or dissolution, and you, the lender, no risk at all. Your bond was a lien upon my personal and other property and earnings; but, there was the understood condition, that the *community was to remain*, and that, as to all matters contemplated in the contract, the *laws were to remain unaltered.* At the very least, it must have been understood, that I was bound no farther than the supreme power of the State could bind me; and, it could not bind me in opposition to its own acts.

Now, in 1817, an Act was passed for the *notorious purpose of preventing me from writing and publishing.* There are men, if they be worthy of the name, who affect to deny this; but these are hypocrites too base and contemptible to notice in a particular manner. The fact is notorious, that the act alluded to was passed for the purpose above alleged. Thus, then, here arose a casualty even *more extraordinary* than the cash-payment measure. It was a casualty that not only put an end to the use of the money lent by you to me, but that put an end to the sole pursuit by which I could possibly obtain the means of making repayment, and that operated, besides, as an act of confiscation

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and of banishment; flight being manifestly necessary to avoid even personal destruction in addition to destruction of property.

Do you find, in any of the authorities before stated, any thing to give countenance to the monstrous notion, that, in a state of violence like this, when the community was, as to me, dissolved; when I was deprived of all kinds of protection; when the laws, by which alone your bond was of force and validity, were no longer in existence as to me: do you find, in any of the authorities before stated, any thing to give countenance to, or, indeed, any not to reprobate this monstrous notion? Is the change of place of the bed of a river; is an overflowing of the sea; are the ravages of an enemy in war; is the violence of civil war; is any one of these a thing more extraordinary, or a better plea for claim of abatement or exoneration, than the act of 1817 was to me? Can any one of these take away the obligation of paying rent more completely than that terrible act took from me the obligation of fulfilling any pecuniary arrangement whatever? The farmer, by the casualties before-mentioned, is deprived of the use of the farm; and was not I deprived of the use of every thing? Was there any thing left of which I had the use?

The authorities before-mentioned have in view the subject of leases only; but, they apply with equal force to pecuniary obligations of every kind. And, though the *laws* of a country and its *courts* can hardly be supposed to contemplate casualties such as I am now speaking of, namely, such as are produced by the *rulers themselves* and in the shape of *laws*; yet, "the BARRISTER" that I have quoted (and whom I suspect to be Mr. WAKEMAN) looks upon the *cause of low prices* as a casualty coming fairly under the view of the principles which he has brought forward. This cause is the measures of the rulers. The casualty, therefore, of 1817, was, to me, what this is to the present tenants, only beyond all measure more ruinous and destructive. And, if the present casualty be, then, to absolve tenants from their contracts, by what rule of law, of equity, or of reason was I to be held to my contract by you? Were you to enjoy all the benefits of civil society, and I none of them? Were you to have your claim held good and firm, while the means of satisfying it were wrested

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from me by a total abrogation, as to me, of all the laws of protection?

The writers on public law, as far as they have noticed it, have fully justified that act of the Americans by which they annulled, in fact, the claims of *British Creditors*, that is to say for sums due to them by Americans *at the breaking out of the revolutionary war*. Their ground was this: the creditors are in a state of *safety;* they have no acts of violence committed on them; they receive protection from the very power that is tearing the debtors to pieces; their bonds and mortgages hold good, while the property and means destined to pay with are ravaged; *therefore*, the debtors shall be *absolved from their obligations*. Were not you, pray, in a state of *safety* while the means, and the only means, of fulfilling the obligations of the bond on my part were wrested from me? Were you and your estate exposed to the same peril and destruction that I and my property were exposed to? It signifies nothing, whether you partook, or not, in producing this peril and injury, any more than, in the case of landlord and tenant, it signifies whether the landlord have been the cause of the casualty. The British Creditors said, that *they were not the cause* of the ravaging of the United States. That may or may not be, said the Americans, but, you want either the will or the power to prevent this ravaging, and, in either case, you must bear your share of the calamities produced by the acts of our common rulers. We, after all, bear the *greatest* share; necessity compels us to submit to this: but, we can never suffer you to come, after the war is over, with your *writs* and *foreclosures* to sweep away what has been left by the fire and the sword. Was not this reasonable; was not this just; was it not a decision perfectly according in principle with all the authorities cited in the former part of this Letter? And, why was I not to act upon these same principles? What was there in the

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letters composing my name that deprived me of a right common to the rest of mankind! Was there any debtor in America more completely ravaged and despoiled in 1776, than I was in 1817? Had he less power of avoiding the blow, or less power of resisting it than I had? How unjust, then, was this law in America; how wicked all the principles of the authorities above stated; what a rogue must any tenant be, who pleads the present casualty, who pleads Peel's Bill, in abatement of rent; or, what a base hypocrite must he be who would allege, that, in 1817, there was not a casualty sufficient to absolve me from the obligations of my bond; and what a swarm of miscreants have been at work for you from 1818, in order to make the world believe, that I had made a *general protest against paying debts*, and had proclaimed, that to *defraud a creditor was no act of immorality!* I have always treated the aspersion with sincere contempt. I have left it to be mouthed about by the noisy and busy "Lavalettes" and by the real rogues of "Purity of Election," quite satisfied that the day would come, when I should find you yourself amongst the foremost in scoffing at a literal adherence to bonds; and in that precise state, with regard to the great Bond of Bonds, *the Debt*, I have now the pleasure to behold you.

But, before I enter upon this, and show how *iniquitous* it is to propose to break through the obligations to the public "*creditor*," if the Cash-measures be not deemed a casualty sufficient to absolve tenants from their obligations, and me from mine; before I enter upon this, let me lay before the public *that letter* of mine, written in November 1817, which has been the ground-work of the floods of calumny poured forth by your myrmidons. The *representations* of this letter only have been put forth. The letter *itself* has always, except in one single instance, been kept carefully out of sight. Its doctrines have been *talked* of, but never *stated*; and,

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for my own part, I have always been so well satisfied of their soundness, and my contempt for those who affected to be "*shocked*" at them has been so great, that I have never thought it worth while to state them myself. *Now*, however, it may be *useful* to do it; because, we are now in a situation, in which principles of this sort must be discussed, and must be acted upon too, or, the capital of farmers and estates of landlords must completely change hands. The Letter, as far as it related to the matter in question, was in the following words:—

"If there be any man, who can "pretend, for one moment, that "mine is an *ordinary case*; and "that, not having enough to pay "every body, I ought to be re-"garded as an *insolvent debtor*, "in the *usual acceptation* of the "word; and, if he do this after "being apprized, that the whole "force of an * * * * * * * was "embodied into the shape of "* * * * ordinances intended "for the sole purpose of taking "from me the real and certain "and increasing means of paying "off every debt and mortgage in "two years. If there be any "man, whose property and whose "means of *profitably employing* "*his own industry* have *remained* "*wholly untouched* and unaffected "by these * * * * and sudden acts "of the Government, and who is "yet so insensible to all feelings "of humanity as well as so wil-"lingly blind to every principle of "either moral or political justice. "If there be any man, who, wholly "absorbed in his attachment to "his own immediate interest, is "ready to cast blame on a debtor, "who has had his means of pay-"ing cut off by an operation as "decisive as that of an Earth-"quake, which should sink into "eternal nothingness his lands, "his houses and his goods. If "there be any man, who, if he "had been *a creditor of Job*, "would have insisted that that "celebrated object of a malignant "devil's wrath which had swept

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"away his flocks, his herds, his "sons and his daughters, was an "*insolvent debtor* and *a bankrupt*, "and ought to have been con- "sidered as such, spoken of as "such, and as such proceeded "against; if there be any such "man as this, to whom I owe "any thing, to such man I first "say, that I despise him from the "bottom of my soul; and then I "say, that if he dare meet me "before the world, in open and "written charge, I pledge myself "to cover him with as much "shame and infamy as that "world can be brought to deign "to bestow upon so contempt- "able a being.——*I hold it to* "*be perfectly just, that I should* "*never, in any way whatever,* "*give up one single farthing* "*of my future earnings to the* "*payment of any debt in Eng-* "*land.* When the society is too "weak, or unwilling, to defend "the property of any particular "member of it; when that mem- "ber is *forcibly driven from the* "use of his property, whether "*mental* or of a more ordinary "and vulgar species, and whom "there is not the will, or the pow- "er, in the society, to yield him "protection, he becomes *clearly* "*absolved of all his engagements* "*of every sort to that society;* "because, in every bargain of "every kind, it is understood, "that *both the parties are to con-* "*tinue to enjoy the protection* "*of the laws of property.*—But, "from the great desire, which I "have, not only to return to my "native country, but also to pre- "vent the * * * * acts levelled "against me from injuring those "persons, with whom I have pe- "cuniary engagements, and some "of whom have become my cre- "ditors from feelings of friendship "and a desire to serve me, *I* "*eagerly wave all claim to this* "*protecting principle*, and I *shall* "*neglect no means within my* "*power* fully to pay and satisfy "every demand, as far as that can "be done consistently with *that* "*duty, which calls on me to take* "*care, that my family have the*

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"*means of fairly exerting their* "*industry, and of leading that* "*sort of life, to which they have* "*a just claim.*"

Now, what sort of answer did you give to this? Did you *controvert* the doctrines? No: but relied, in my absence, on a pretended answer; *shown at Brookes's in the Strand*, and suffered to be copied to be taken about the country? A page or two of stuff (which I have not here), a sort of half jest and half earnest, about "*a new way of paying old debts;*" and (while the letter, to which you professed to be giving an answer, was kept out of sight) giving it to be understood, that that letter held the doctrine, that *no man was bound to pay, or ought to pay, any debt of any sort, if he wanted the money for other purposes!* This was the colour which your show-answer gave to my letter. An answer *not sent to me.* Not *published* in the newspapers. In either of these cases I should have *seen* it. But there the base tissue of misrepresentations was lying at Brookes's in the Strand, for nearly a year, to be shown to every one that it was deemed injurious to me to show it to, and to be copied by persons going to the country, that it might also be shown in great towns; and thus get circulated all over the kingdom *without my knowing any thing of the matter!*

I need not *characterize* this act of yours. *Another opportunity* of doing that will offer; for, the whole of the transactions of *you* and of *Wright* with regard to me shall be, in regular form, put into imperishable print. For the present (and not for a long while) I shall confine myself to the doctrine of my Letter of 1817. The great *handle* has been the closing part of it, where I contend for the right of retaining, out of *future earnings*, a sufficiency to make provision for my family. I am not talking of any thing that I *have*, but of what I may be able to acquire. So that, if this be unsound doctrine; if this be *im-*

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moral, what is the doctrine of the authorities above cited, which think of no such thing as touching even the *present capital of the tenant?* But, what is your *own doctrine* as to the *Debt?* You now say distinctly that the *Debt must be reduced.* That is to say, that a part of it, at least, must be *unpaid.* And, what ground do you state for this? Why, that the nation, without *ruin*, is *unable* to pay it. Pray, Sir, is it *more* unable than I was rendered by the Act of 1817? And, what is *ruin?* Why, the misery, the bodily suffering, of multitudes of persons, unjustly plunged into that suffering. Well, then, if this be a ground for the non-payment of the *public* Debt, why were I and my family to be deprived of the benefit of the same sort of ground, only much more clear and more strong, seeing that we have no decided proof, that the nation did not participate in causing the acts which produced the calamities, with which it is threatened, while it is clear, that I did not participate in causing the calamities with which I was threatened?

You had *my bond*, and the fundholder *has yours.* When you are called upon for payment, and are reminded of the "*good faith*" due to the fundholder, you answer, that the first of *public faith*, is due to the *public itself.* This is very true; but, this was not the doctrine of your *whispering* answer to my Letter of 1817. This letter of yours I have not at hand; but, I am sure I am right in saying that it laughed at the idea of any mitigation of the bond; any right of abatement that the debtor possessed; any claim to deduction of any sort on account of the calamity, the distress of mind or the bodily suffering to which the fulfilment of the bond might expose him or his children. The mean hypocrites who have been your helpers as to this matter, and the most despicable of whom cling to you merely because you are rich; these hypocrites pretend to be shocked at the principle, that I was to retain, of my future

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earnings, if it pleased God to preserve my life, and to continue to me the capacity to labour; these hypocritical rogues pretended to be shocked that I should avow my determination to retain a sufficiency of those earnings to give my family a fair chance of well-being in the world. What will the hypocrites say, then, to you now? Will the rogues be shocked at your proposition to withhold from the fundholder that which is due to him, because, to pay him to the last farthing would leave you neither stick, stone, nor sod of your estate? Is it any more just that the people belonging to the Savings Banks, that the widows, the orphans innumerable, and the immumerable aged persons who have money in the funds; is it any more just that their bond should be set aside than it was that your bond should be set aside, and that, too, in a case where you may have been a participator in the causes that have produced your inability to pay without your ruin being the consequence?

The truth is, that the interest of the debt ought to be greatly reduced. Contracts can never be binding, except things continue, generally speaking, in the state in which they were when the contract was made. Casualties, whether proceeding from the hand of man or the hand of God; casualties of so extraordinary a nature as not, by any means, to be foreseen, or at all contemplated by the parties, must admit of, and receive, mitigation, or evils enormous, oppression and cruelty without bounds, and, in some cases, a dissolution of the Society itself must be the result. I have petitioned the Parliament against my mortgagee; though, really, without even a desire to succeed except in the way of precedent in favour of others, seeing that in that quarter I have experienced every thing which the greatest consideration and kindness could suggest. The forecloser is an executor. He has no power of mitigation. The principle that I there contended for is precisely the principle contended for by the

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able writer to whose pamphlet I have been so much indebted; and it is the principle of my letter of 1817, for the doctrines of which letter you yourself, Sir, are now bound to contend, or else your proposition to deduct from the fundholder stands before the world as a naked unqualified instigation to the most barefaced robbery.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient
Humble Servant,
WM. COBBETT.

N. B. The pamphlet above quoted is published by Longman and Co. and I earnestly recommend it to the attention of the public.

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VISIT TO FARNHAM.

I HAVE long since passed that point within which man can with propriety be accused of what is called egotism. If I were not, it would be impossible for me to separate, at this time of day, a great deal of that which closely concerns myself, from that which must now be interesting to the Country at large. I proceed, therefore, without more ceremony to state, that, for the last thirty years I have been almost wholly unacquainted with any person, except merely my immediate relations, living in or near the place of my birth; and, when I was a boy, my situation in life was such, as to preclude the probability of persons at all connected with wealth or influence, having any knowledge of me. When I say thirty years, I mean that I have scarcely been in the place, except passing through it, during the whole of that time; and from about twelve years of age, I resided in or near the place but very little. It was therefore with a degree of gratification that I should very difficultly express, that I received, about ten days ago, a written invitation, signed by about *thirty* Gentlemen of the town of Farnham and its neighbourhood, to dine in that town on the thirtieth instant (yesterday) in company with such of my Townsmen as would be there present, on the day appointed. — On Tuesday morning I set off from London for Mr. Knowles's at Thursley; and yesterday proceeded, in company

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with that gentleman, to Farnham.

The dinner was at the Goat's Head. Mr. John Leech, of Lea, was called to the Chair; and there were about one hundred and fifty persons sat down to dinner in the same room, being as many as it would hold at the tables. Other gentlemen dined in other rooms, and joined us after the dinner was over. The *business* upon such occasions is not that of eating and drinking: it is that of stating opinions and proclaiming of sentiments. Those which prevailed upon the present occasion, will be learnt from the following account, which I am quite convinced will be read with great interest by all those who have accompanied me in contending for those principles, which have exposed them in common with me to so much obloquy for so long a time, and which must, at last, prevail throughout the country, if the country be to be preserved from the most dreadful of all scourges that can befal a nation.

The first toast was, The King.

The next, An efficient Reform in the Commons House of Parliament.

Mr. Leech, the Chairman, then rose and said, that he deemed it a very great honour to have been placed in the Chair, by a Meeting so numerous and of so excellent a description as that; but that he deemed it doubly honourable that he should have been placed there upon an occasion which made it a part of the pleasing duty of the day, to propose to them the health of Mr. COBBETT, who had so long and so disinterestedly laboured in the service of the country, and whose advice, if followed, would have saved the country from the gulf that was now opening before it.

It now became my task to express my thanks for this very great honour; and I addressed the company in, as nearly as the reporter's notes will guide me, the following words.—Gentlemen, It is hardly

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necessary for me to say, or rather for me to attempt to describe, with what pleasure I receive this mark of your approbation. To be thus invited to, and received in, the place of my birth, is calculated to give me particular satisfaction; to which I may add another circumstance by no means less honourable to me, namely, that my health has been proposed to you by him who, as far as my observation and my means of obtaining information have been able to extend, appears to be almost the only man left in the county of Surrey, truly worthy of the name of Country Gentleman.—Gentlemen, it is not a Nabob, loaded with the spoils of slaves; it is not a lucky adventurer in the rich mines of corruption, whose return you are assembled to welcome; but, one who, after a long absence, and after having to endure the buffetings of that corruption, comes back to you almost as destitute of riches as he left you. On your part, therefore, no motive can be more pure, no motive more generous; and I shall endeavour to avail myself of the opportunity to communicate to you such thoughts of my own as I think likely to be of real use in this critical situation of the affairs of the country.—It must be well known to you all, Gentlemen, that, for many years past, I have been endeavouring, in every way that suggested itself to my mind, to stem the torrent of corruption, and to produce a Reform in the Parliament. Those who have been fattening upon that corruption, or have been wishing to fatten upon that corruption; the faction out of power, as well as the faction in power, have entertained a degree of hatred towards me quite commensurate with the magnitude of these my exertions. For nearly twenty years, and incessantly for thirteen years, this combination, not less unnatural than it was powerful, has existed; and it is by no means an exaggeration to say, that one object of which they have never lost sight, has been *to keep me down*.

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Strange as it may seem, incredible as it may appear to posterity, monstrous as is the proposition, there is no person of the present day who has paid but an ordinary attention to what we call Politics, that must not be convinced that no small part of the measures of those who have borne sway in this country, have turned on the question, "Will their adop-"tion or their rejection tend to "fulfil the prophecies of Cob-"bett?" There is something so strange and perverse in this, something so out of nature as well as out of reason, that one would almost be afraid to state it as a truth; but there are so many who hear me, who know it to be true, that I scruple not again and again to assert, that the very measures which have at last brought such calamity upon the country, have unquestionably arisen out of the motive of falsifying those predictions, which, if verified, must necessarily give me a large portion of esteem amongst the people in general. Nevertheless, at the end of thirteen years of a species of hostility such as no human being, as I believe, ever was exposed to before, I have certainly some claim to that attention, which many men have not hitherto been inclined to bestow upon my opinions. Those who are still disposed to say that I go too far, should now consider that they themselves are ready to go a part of the way. Having been hitherto wrong so far, they ought, it seems to me, to be less confident of their own judgment as to the remainder. They ought, at least, before they condemn now, to hesitate long, to consider well, and to wait events. Not to give their judgment up for mine; but, while they agree with me as far as they can, to suspect that the time is approaching when they will go the full length.—There was a time, to which my memory recalls me, when, if my advice had been followed, present calamities would all have been prevented. I recollect, when the people of Hampshire met on Portsdown Hill, to

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petition the Parliament;—and for what! Why, for a reduction of the interest of the debt; a reduction of salaries, pensions and pay, proportionate to the reduction in the price of produce; and, for an abolition of all unmerited pensions, sinecures and grants; in order that the taxes might be reduced, and that the country might be enabled to proceed without the ruin of the middle class of society;—While we were proposing, discussing and signing that Petition upon the hill, several corps of yeomanry cavalry were prancing and brandishing their swords in the valley beneath, watching our proceedings, and ready for an assault upon us as if we had been open rebels or foreign invaders. Upon my return towards London, being at Horn-Dean, I found that one of those corps of yeomanry cavalry had gone from this very town of Farnham; and one of the men belonging to that corps showed me and gave me a bullet, being part of the ammunition furnished him in the way of preparation for the probable exploits of the day. Ah! Gentlemen, if the prayers of that petition had been received with attention; or, if our arguments had been met by reasoning, by persuasion; instead of being met by bullets, the Yeomanry of the present day would have known nothing of those harassings of mind, that state of irritating uncertainty, that dreadful looking forward which now keep them and their families in a state of distraction. There is no man engaged in the pursuits of agriculture, no man who has a pecuniary contract or engagement of any sort, whether in farming or in trade, who can give even a guess of what is to happen to him. This state of things never could have existed, if those who were then prepared to argue with us from the mouths of their muskets and pistols, had joined us in our prayers for that reduction which, if it had been adopted, would then have come in time; but which now, though it were to be adopted to-morrow, must come too late to prevent a

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chaos of calamity, such as this once happy country never knew or heard of before. Strange is the reverse of things! Those who were then made to believe that we were slanderers of the government; rebels that aimed at the overthrow of the King; plunderers and devastators, that aimed at the destruction of all property;—strange indeed the reverse, when these very men are now seen the most eager and the most clamorous for obtaining those very things which we then prayed for, and for praying for which, they were, if a pretext had been furnished them, ready to put us to death!—There are, however, it must be confessed, some who are not even yet cured of their folly. Poets and painters, satirists of all descriptions, have racked their imaginations to find or to feign characters to expose to the ridicule of mankind. But was there ever held up for that purpose, any thing so ridiculous in this world; did any satirist ever hold forth, on the stage or off the stage, any being looking so much like a fool, as the man who, after bawling and swilting for thirty years against jacobins, as men aiming at revolution and the destruction of property, finds himself fairly bundled into the road, without a penny in his pocket or a second shirt to his back, by a successful and glorious victory over those jacobins! But, if there be a man, who to this ridiculousness of situation add a degree of blindness and perverseness, which makes him still rail, not against those who have ruined him, but against those who would have saved him if they could,—all that I can say is, that he deserves every thing that this unreformed Parliament has done, for him and has in store for him; and what can human being deserve more!—I now come, Gentlemen, to that part of my intended address to you, which, as I before stated, was to contain something that I hoped might be of real utility to you in the conducting of your affairs in this crisis of the country. The main question appears to be,

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Whether prices will fall lower than they now are? My opinion is, that they will fall lower. This being a matter of opinion, it is worth nothing, unless something like reason be given in support of it. My reasons are these. We all, now, pretty well understand, that the cause of the low prices has been the very great diminution that has taken place in the quantity of the circulating money. This is pretty generally understood and acknowledged; but it may not be so clear to every one, that the quantity of the circulating money is likely still to grow less. I am of opinion that this is inevitable, unless we come to paper-money again, about which I will speak by and by. The Bank of England is said to pay in cash; and so it does, if you go to the Bank itself and carry its notes, but, all over the country these notes are still a *legal tender*; and they prevent gold from being paid by Country-bankers in exchange for their notes. Thus, while the Bank with one hand pays in gold in London, it, with the other hand, prevents gold from getting into the country. This power of prevention is to cease, according to Peel's Bill, *next May*; so that, in eleven months from this time, whoever takes a country note to a country-bank, and demands payment, must be paid, not in Bank of England notes, but in gold.—Now, Gentlemen, what will the effect of this be? Why, to lessen the whole quantity of money afloat in the country. Why should it? I may be asked, seeing that for every pound of paper drawn in, there will be a sovereign issued out. This will not be the case; for, there must come from other nations a great many millions in gold to supply the place of the paper. That draft of gold from abroad, will lessen the quantity and *rise the price of it there*; so that our paper-money must be further and further diminished in quantity in order to keep it up to a par with gold; and, of course, our prices must continue to fall

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lower and lower, till they come to nearly a level with those of the countries from which the gold comes; and how low that may be it would be difficult to say. It is said by some, that the prices will, at any rate, not be lower than they were just before the late war. They are already lower; and I can see no reason for their not going much lower yet. Just before the last war, this country and other countries had the gold of France scattered about amongst them; for, in France, all was paper-money. France takes, as its share, about *forty millions of guineas*. Therefore, we cannot have any part of this now; and we had a large part of it just before the war. We must, then, when we return to cash, have less gold than we had in 1792; and, as we shall not be able to keep afloat more paper than we did then, our prices must become lower than they were in 1792; and wheat, on an average of years, may not reach even *four shillings a bushel*. That may be about the mark; but, I should think that *four* shillings is rather above it than below it. We have not hop-pickers for Ministers; if we had, they perhaps might discover another great difference, in this respect, between the present time and the year 1792. The hop-pickers might discover, that it requires more money to pay for picking *fifty-six* bushels of hops at twopence a bushel, than it does to pay for picking *sixteen* bushels at the same price. Consequently, more money will be wanted at Farnham in the former than in the latter case. Hop-picking Ministers would, therefore, be at no loss to find out, that when the taxes amount to fifty-six millions a-year, instead of sixteen, which was the amount of them in 1792, there will be required a greater quantity of money to be afloat for this purpose; or, the hop-pickers would see as clearly as the noses on each other's faces, that, if this greater quantity of floating money could not be obtained, there would be less afloat for the pur-

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pose of buying and selling; and that, of course, prices must be *lower than in* 1792.—I beg leave to assure you, Gentlemen, that I have not stolen this argument from our wise Ministers. God forbid I should rob them of any thing of which they have not first robbed me; for, heaven knows, they have little of their own to spare. I give you the argument as from myself; I state it with submission to your better judgment, and request you to give it a due portion of your consideration.—If I am correct, then, in my view of this matter, how is any farmer to escape ruin, who is bound by lease? How is any man to pay rent, to pay taxes, and all other out-goings, from prices such as those of which these arguments would give us a prospect? It surely becomes every man bound by pecuniary contracts of any sort, to build his calculations upon these views of mine, unless he detect a fallacy in those views. It is clear that if I am right, the great mass of national calamity must go on increasing; that there can be no remedy, except in a very great reduction of the taxes; and that it is madness to expect such reduction, without that taking place, which has formed the subject of the second toast given by the worthy Chairman, namely, a Reform in the Commons House of Parliament, the want of that Reform being notoriously the great cause of this terrible burthen of taxation.—The toast expresses a wish that we should have an *efficient* Reform. For my own part, I prefer the word *radical* reform. The word Radical has been interpreted to mean, amongst other horrid things, sedition and rebellion. But what does it mean? It means something belonging to or appertaining to the root; and if we have an evil to remove, is it not necessary to go to the root of it? can we remove it without going to the root of it? There may be those who, having their pastures infested by docks, prefer the cutting of them off just beneath the ground, to the digging of them

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clean up. I am for the latter mode. In Politics as well as in Husbandry, I am for going to the root, and therefore am for a *radical reform*. We are asked, by those who are really for doing nothing, What *good* a Reform could do us? and, Whether it would put any money into the distressed farmer's pocket? Perhaps it might not put money into his pocket; but the next best thing is, to prevent money from being taken out of his pocket; and this, to a certainty, is what a reform of the House of Commons would do. A considerable portion of the farmer's embarrassment and distress immediately arises from his having such enormous sums to pay in poor-rates; and these poor-rates are ascribed to every cause under heaven but the true cause. If the farmer, when he has paid ten shillings in wages to the labourer, could follow the labourer afterwards and see him expend that ten shillings, he would find that five out of the ten, if not more, went into the hands of the tax-gatherer, and were not carried home to be consumed in the labourer's dwelling. He would find that it is not the labourer, who has been incessantly railed against by those who ought to have been his protectors; that it is not he who has at all assisted in reducing the farmer to misery; he would find that out of every five pence for a pot of beer, three-pence halfpenny at the least is tax; and, if he examine well, he will find that it is those who have imposed and who consume the taxes, that have been the real cause of all that he suffers and all that he apprehends. What outcries have we heard about the enormous expense of maintaining the poor! We have been told that, if not stopped, they will swallow up every man's estate. Projects have been broached for preventing them from marrying, and for reducing them to the state of the *Irish*. These railers forget all the time, that while the poor-taxes amount to about *six* millions a year, the other taxes (in Great

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Britain) including the expense of collection, amount to not less than sixty millions a year! Yet the whole of the blame is to be laid at the door of the suffering labourers, who, while they are toiling for their bread, are to be stigmatized with the degrading appellation of Paupers. Instead of looking fairly into the cause of their misery, those who inveigh against them seem to regard them as a separate cast of beings; as a distinct and different breed of animals. But I trust, Gentlemen, that all we who are here present, at any rate, shall not fail to reflect, that it may be owing to accidental circumstances, that we ourselves are not exposed to the humiliation of receiving parish relief. For my own part, you must well know, that it was owing to accident that I was not a labourer all my life. I feel this at any rate; and unnatural indeed should I be, if I had not great consideration for all that class of men, who, performing, as they do, the toils of the community, are entitled, when they experience distress, to our most solicitous regard and kindest compassion. At any rate, it is cowardly, as well as unjust, to throw upon the defenceless the blame which is wholly due to the powerful.—It is the taxes, Gentlemen, and not the marrying, or any thing else belonging to the labourers that has produced this fearful mass of calamity. This being the cause of the evil, is it not rational, and is it not necessary that we enquire who it is that imposes these taxes? If I feel myself undergoing repeated blows upon my back, shall I not look round to see by whom those blows are inflicted? If I find myself loaded with charges and demands which are daily producing my ruin, shall I not enquire who it is that causes the charges and demands to be made? And if we apply this to our present state, do we not find that these demands are made in virtue of acts passed by the Parliament? This being the case, is not the next thing to enquire, whether the Parliament

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would thus load us if it were reformed! At any rate, when the distress is general, and almost beyond human endurance, is there not reason to suppose that another mode of electing the members would tend to produce relief? And here I put this to every individual in this respectable and sensible company, namely, Whether he believes, that, if the House of Commons were elected by the people at large, we ever should have known the burthens which we now have to bear, and the innumerable calamities which have been the consequence of those burthens?—In answer to the reformers, it has, in time past, been the fashion to say, "No "matter how the House is elect-"ed, it works well;" and then they have reminded us of what they call the *prosperity* of the country. Now, however, they will hardly cite the prosperity of the country as a proof of the Parliaments' working well. I need not give you my description of the state of the kingdom; I need not appeal even to the evidences of your own experience. I have only to take the declarations made in the Parliament itself by the Ministers, by Members of the House, and by Committees appointed by the House. These declarations have gone forth to the world; and what do they say to that world? Why, that farms in England cannot now, though without rent, be cultivated without loss to the husbandman; that two-thirds of those husbandmen, the most ingenious and the most industrious, and formerly the most easy and happy in the world, are now in a state of insolvency; that in another part of the kingdom, a million and a half of the people are destitute of a sufficiency of food, and that thousands upon thousands of them are actually perishing from starvation; at the very time that projects are on foot for taking corn into pawn on account of its superabundance; and at the very time, also, when an extent from the crown, that is to say, a seizure for taxes by force of

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arms, is actually going on in one of those very counties afflicted with the dreadful scourge of starvation. This is their own account of the state of the country. And will they yet tell us that the Parliament works well? If this be working well, I should be glad to know what can work ill. The newspapers, those base hirelings, that have been crying up the present system for so many years, and decrying with such virulence all those who have been opposed to it, are now putting forth piteous moans, begging and praying the beggared people of England, two-thirds of the farmers of whom are insolvent, to subscribe for the relief of their starving fellow-subjects in Ireland. Was the like of this ever seen in any country in the world before? was such a thing ever before heard of? did the most vehement opposer of any government ever, in the utmost heat of description and the greatest exaggerations of fancy, pourtray any thing equal to this? And yet shall we be told that the thing works well! Added to all our sufferings, humiliations and mortifications, shall this inexpressible insult be hurled in our teeth? Let me deal fairly, however, by both Ministers and Parliament; and not ascribe to the wickedness of intention that which has proceeded solely from a want of foresight and of judgment. Whitfield said, that no man ever prayed to be damned; and would not a man pray even for that, as soon as he would desire to see calamities like these, while he himself must be deemed to have had a share in producing them? God forbid that I should say any thing tending to bring the Parliament into contempt; but I trust I may say, without subjecting myself to pain of life or limb, that if my advice had been followed; that if the measures long ago pointed out by me had been pursued, this lamentable and disgraceful state of things never would have existed. I will also take the liberty to say, that if the Parliament had been reformed, those things, which are

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now pressing so many virtuous families to the earth, never could, in my opinion, have been known in England. After all, however, I am aware that there are men so perverse or so besotted, as to be frightened still, or affect to be frightened, at the sound of reform. The influence of such men may prevail for a while; but come reform will, sooner or later, and in some shape or other; and, all that we know of the precise result is this, that the longer it be delayed, the worse it will be for the nation. —Before I conclude, it will be expected, perhaps, that I submit to you my opinion with regard to the probability of a repeal of Mr. Peel's Bill. Much will evidently depend upon whether this measure shall or shall not be adopted. As to any mitigation of the Bill;—as to the small-note project, the Branch-bank project, and that of legal tender, it would be hazarding a great deal too much to offer even a guess, seeing that I am perfectly satisfied that the Ministers themselves do not know what they shall propose, nor what they shall not propose, though they have now had so many months to think of the matter. Of one thing I am very certain; and that is, that, as long as the Bank of England shall be compelled to make payment in gold in any shape, at 77 shillings 10½ pence an ounce, there can be no augmentation of the quantity of the circulating money. To repeal that part of the Bill would be the most shameful, the most disgraceful thing ever done in the world by any body of men of any description. See how firmly the whole of the Government stand pledged to carry through this measure! Solemn reports of committees of both Houses prepared the way for it. Unanimous votes of both Houses passed it. The old King used to say, that when the Ministry and the Opposition disagreed about measures, sometimes one was right and sometimes the other; but when they agreed, both were sure to be wrong. In this case, his late Majesty's opinion appears

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to have been verified; but, at any rate, the passing was unanimous, amidst general cheering, and almost huzzas and the tossing up of hats. Then came the Speaker of the Commons, in a set speech, presenting the Bill to the Regent, eulogizing the wisdom and integrity of the House in passing it; last of all came the Regent's thanks to the House, for their skill, their assiduity, their firmness, and all their other good qualities in bringing to a conclusion this mighty measure for the benefit of the country and the glory of the crown. And can they repeal this Bill? Can they undo this mighty deed, this deed which was to immortalize the Parliament of 1819! Besides this, to repeal the Bill would, you will understand, be an open declaration of bankruptcy. The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared last year, that if we could not pay now, we could never pay. I closed with him at once, taking the *never* side of the question. But at any rate it must be manifest to the whole world, that if the gold once more disappear, it never can return while there is a fragment of the present system remaining. There is yet another reason for not repealing this famous Bill. The unanimous adopters of it stand pledged to carry it through, or to make me out *a true prophet*. Before the Bill was passed I warned them of all the consequences. They passed it nevertheless; and when they had done it I said, "Now we have them." These words they have not forgotten. They know that these words have been read in France, in America, and in most other countries. They know that all their movements are watched. They know that the whole world is looking on, to see the result. They are wedded to this Bill; as safely bound to it as man is to wife; and we all know how difficult, if we were graceless enough to wish it, it is to break through bonds of that description. They know well that there will be no remissness on my part; that it is no crime for me to remind them

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of my prophecies; and that as long as there is pen and paper in England, reminded of them they will be. The difficulties, therefore, in the way of repealing this Bill are so great, that I do not believe it will be attempted; and if you think with me, Gentlemen, upon this subject, this conclusion should be continually in your minds, when you are thinking of pecuniary engagements or prospects of any description.—It remains, Gentlemen, only for me to repeat how sensibly I feel the honour done me by the worthy Chairman and yourselves this day; and to assure you that, while it always has been my pride to boast of my countrymen and townsmen, I hope I shall never give either cause to be ashamed of me.

I then gave as a toast,—"Prosperity and happiness to the town of Farnham and its neighbourhood."

The Chairman then gave Mr. DENNISON; and after that, Lord KING, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. HUME.

After this, Mr. KNOWLES, Vice President, proposed the health of the CHAIRMAN, who said—

Gentlemen, I deem the honour you have done me to-day, in placing me in this chair, upon this occasion, when Mr. Cobbett was to be welcomed by his native Town, as the greatest honour that I ever received in my life, and I do most sincerely assure you that I regard this as the happiest day that I ever spent. I return you my best thanks, and have the pleasure to drink all your healths.

Mr. Leech's health had been drunk with particular marks of respect, attachment, and affection; and, certainly, the sincerity on both sides was as great as it is possible to witness, and impossible not to admire.

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Upon coming away, which I was obliged to do at a very early hour, I took my leave of the company thus: Gentlemen, it is with great reluctance that I separate myself from you so soon; and before I depart, give me leave once more to return you my thanks for this very kind invitation and reception. Within this twelvemonth, I have, I believe, been in twenty-one counties of England. I have had opportunities of witnessing the feelings of men in those different counties, and it gives me, I assure you, the greatest satisfaction to be able with truth to observe, that I have no where seen a better spirit, sentiments more just, zeal more ardent, feelings more honourable, than in this, the Town that gave me birth. I must be suffered to add, however, an expression of my surprise, as it has often been with me a subject of sorrow and of indignation, that my native county should have returned one of the men who calls himself its Member. When I contrast the sentiments that you have so clearly evinced this day; when I reflect that there are here present men of substance and of sense from every town and village within many miles of the place where we are; when I reflect that it is next to impossible that there must not be many in your several neighbourhoods entertaining the same sentiments with yourselves; how am I to account for the notorious fact, that one of the members returned for this county presents, in his sentiments and conduct, that which is diametrically opposite to every feeling evinced by you! As far as I have had an opportunity of observing, and I have observed pretty attentively, I have

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found that man advocating, on the one hand, every thing repugnant to the real interests of the people; every thing repugnant to justice and to honesty; and on the other hand, opposing himself with all his might to every thing honest, just, and merciful, particularly in the case of the late unfortunate and ever-to-be-lamented Queen. I charge not even him, however, with injustice, dishonesty and cruelty; but with doing those things which I deem, which are in my opinion worthy of having that character affixed to them; and the thing that appears strange to me is, that your sentiments should be in unison with my own, while this man is one of your Members. How can this be, if all amongst yourselves be honest and sincere? For a man to tell me that he is swayed by his *interest;* that his interest compels him to do this or that; that his interest compels him to act in a manner contrary to the wishes of his heart; for a man to tell me that, is no more than any rogue will tell me; for what does the rogue do but set his conscience at defiance, while he is in pursuit of what he deems his interest? The rogue may be, and very frequently is, stimulated to his misdeeds by want; by the cravings of hunger, or by something little short of it; but the man who barters his vote for the sake of what he calls his interest, is not only guilty of an act of the basest description, but is animated in the commission of it by the basest of motives.

I then came away, and returned home to Kensington, having spent a day which, certainly, I may consider as one of the happiest of my life, though few men perhaps

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ever spent so many happy days as myself. Farnham, compared with many other places, is small, and somewhat obscure; and, the value which I set upon this invitation is founded principally upon the evidence which I consider it to be of the progress of those opinions and those principles, in the general prevalence of which, and in that alone, I can see, and have been able to see any hope of deliverance for the country. The progress of knowledge is at all times slow, even under the most favourable circumstances; what must, then, be its progress, not only with nothing extraneous to aid it, but with the whole force of every man in power in the kingdom against it, with ninety-nine hundredths of that powerful engine, the press, constantly aiding that tremendous opposition! The base ruffians; the hired, the mercenary, the savage knaves that have been spreading slanders about the country under my own name; those most detestable of all villains, who, conscious of impunity, knowing well what picking and packing can do in the way of giving them security; these worse than poisoners and cut-throats, who have been spreading about the country, at the enormous expence of villains who, if possible, exceed the agents in atrocity,—these ruffians have constantly taken particular pains to supply the town of Farnham with publications purporting to be written by me, but containing the most abominable falsehoods, the most diabolical slanders against myself. These have not wanted circulators amongst the peculators or would-be peculators in the town and neighbourhood. But where were the slanders and the slan-

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derers, when I myself made my appearance upon the spot? In how many cases have these vile ruffians been furnished with opportunities to meet me face to face, to avow their publications, and to vouch for the work of their pen with their tongue? in how many cases have I afforded them this opportunity! And, has one of them ever dared to show his face? Backed as the ruffians are by influence, by direct power; furnished as they are with all sorts of means; easy as it is for them to find ruffians on the spot to second their efforts; how is it that all skulk from the light when I make my appearance? There wants nothing more than this to prove to any honest man the villany of these calumniators. There is no excuse for the man who affects to believe them; he is, and he must be, either fool or knave; and as we seldom find folly so gross, it would be folly in ourselves not to impute it to knavery. There is a certain description of men that affect to have their *doubts*. What doubts can they have, when the calumniators are nameless and faceless at the same time; when they dare not meet me in person, and when they dare not even put their names to what they write? These affected doubters are, therefore, knaves in disguise. Time was, when they took a more decided tone: they have now shifted their ground: they have gone from condemnation into the regions of doubt; and the best way for plain sincerity is to give them full credit for all the malignity that they ever possessed, and to ascribe the change in their conduct, not to their candour, but to their fear. My path has been straight forward: straight

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forward it shall still be. I detest, above all things, that hypocrisy which fain would, but which dare not, commit the acts of which the bold and open villain is guilty.

STARVATION IN IRELAND.

THE readers of the Register well know, that, many (at least seven) years ago, I said it would come to this if an attempt were made to pay in Cash without *reducing the interest of the Debt.* I said that hundreds of thousands of people must *die of starvation in the ditches by the way-side,* or, that this must be prevented by means, which, though I described them then I shall not describe them now. The impudent and savage sons and daughters of Corruption scoffed at me when I said this. The thing will, I am happy to see, be prevented *in England,* by the poor-laws, which will stop the rent and tithe and give them to the labourers. But, in Ireland, unless corruption is even a greater liar than usual, the thing is come in all its horrors. The following is taken from the *Courier,* the chief herald of corruption. This, then, is the hag's *own statement* of the result of her doings! She does not say a word about the *cause* of this frightful mass of misery. We are left to suppose, that *she* has had nothing at all to do in the producing of it. However, it is come; and it would puzzle wiser pates than have now to guide the machine to say, *when* and *how* it is to go away.

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(From the Dublin Patriot of Thursday last.)

"DISTRESS, HUNGER, AND DISEASE.—We are grieved at the necessity which demands our transcription of the following melancholy details. They are from the provincial papers received this morning, and are calculated to awaken the sympathy of every feeling heart. Though the work of benevolence and mercy is pursuing, in every quarter, with alacrity and effect, and though the progress of charity is marked by the blessings it dispenses, still, it will be seen, much is yet to be done.

County of GALWAY.—There are many persons in the neighbourhood of this town who, in addition to their present sufferings, have not even hope to cheer them—their ground remains untilled, the manure is at their door, but having no potatoes for seed, they cannot sow their gardens. The Committee, whose means are exceedingly limited when compared with the distress they have to remove, feel it their first duty to administer relief to those who are actually starving; and therefore cannot give the cottager for seed any part of the potatoes that have been imported. Letters, therefore, should be sent in every direction, to invite a large quantity of potatoes into this market, else that scarcity which we now seek to remove, will again be felt next season. We pray the Dublin papers to awaken their neighbours as to our condition, in the hope that they may hasten us a supply before the season for planting be passed.—*Galway Paper.*

County of SLIGO.—On Saturday, at the opening of the market, potatoes experienced a reduction of one penny per stone. This sudden fall was occasioned by the arrival at the quay of about twenty tons of potatoes from Coleraine, which the Committee bought up and retailed on Saturday, out of the vessel, at a reduced price, to such persons as wished to plant them. The Com-

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mittee took the precaution to cause the potatoes so purchased to be prepared for the ground, by cutting, before they were suffered to be carried from the quay.

We are distressed to learn, upon the joint authority of the Protestant and Catholic Clergymen of the neighbouring parish of Drumcliff, that there are nearly two thousand families of their parishioners wholly dependant upon the *market* for food, and that a vast majority of those are without funds wherewith to lay in provision for the short space of twenty-four hours. It is awful to contemplate what the consequences of such a state of things must be, unless prompt and effectual means of relief be immediately resorted to; and it grieves us farther to add, that a fever of a malignant type, has made its appearance in the same quarter.

County of KERRY.—TRALEE, May 18.—We are grieved to say that, in addition to the present scarcity and general distress, the ravages of pestilence and disease are spreading dreadfully in this County. Typhus fever, the horrible, though natural, attendant on unwholesome and scanty food, and griping poverty, now begins to rage amongst our starving population. Our Fever Hospital is crowded, and shortly, miserable wretches sinking under famine and disease, will be seen perishing in our streets and highways, unless the evil be speedily checked by the hand of judicious benevolence, and of this we have now every hope and expectation.—*Western Herald.*

County of CORK.—Accounts are pouring in, from almost every quarter of the county, of the accumulating distresses of the poor.

County of LIMERICK.—With pleasure we refer to the meetings held in various parts of the county, to alleviate the distress which is now become general. We trust that the laudable disposition of the resident gentry may be assisted by large contributions from the absentee landlords, whose tenantry are at present, in many cases, to be much deplored: in one parish in this county, 40 acres of ground remain

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untilled, for want of seed potatoes.

The subscriptions paid in, to the Treasurer, for the poor of this City, amount this morning to 1122*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* The Committee have undertaken to superintend the employment of the labouring poor, and have established three soup kitchens, capable of feeding 6000 persons a-day gratis. These arrangements certainly deserve credit; and we recommend our fellow-citizens to place their confidence in the exertions of those gentlemen who have so humanely undertaken this very arduous business.

The Lord Bishop of Limerick has given 30*l.* worth of seed potatoes to the poor widows and cotters on his Lordship's property near this city.—*Limerick Chronicle.*

County of CARLOW.—We are happy to hear that several Gentlemen of this county are reducing their rents from twenty to thirty per cent., on the tenants paying up the arrears, which the latter are endeavouring to do, by borrowing money from their friends. This system, we hope, will be found to do best for all parties ultimately."

(*From Freeman's Dublin Journal of Saturday last.*)

We are grieved to state, that the accounts from the distressed Counties are still deplorable in the extreme.

The village of Tulla, in the county of Clare, presents a most melancholy spectacle at present. It is crowded with persons in the utmost wretchedness, coming from all parts of the barony to purchase oatmeal. The Committee have been serving out this meal from six in the morning until five in the evening, and one half of the poor who attend are not supplied during that time. —The purchasers are so urgent in their supplications that it is with the utmost difficulty they can be restrained by the police and yeomanry, who are called in for the purpose. One woman among the crowd exclaimed, "O Heavens! how shall I face my hungry children without a morsel to give them?". Another devoured her scanty sup-

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ply raw. A man who purchased a stone of barley said he should boil some of it on going home, for if he waited to make it into meal, his family would starve. Such an extent of misery as prevails in all parts of the county of Clare was never before witnessed.

A Meeting was held at Kilmallock, in the county of Limerick, on the 14th, relative to the distressed poor of the parishes of St. Peter and Paul, Ballingoddy, and Tankardstown, at which it was

"Resolved—1st. That Government be made acquainted with the uniform loyal conduct of these parishes; upon the tender feelings and humanity of which the parishioners place the strongest reliance for temporary relief during these times of general calamity and distress.

"2d. That from eleven to twelve hundred paupers in this district, have not the means of subsistence for three months.

"3d. That no less a sum than from six to seven hundred pounds would be sufficient to subsist those persons, and prevent starvation and sickness, which have already commenced in several instances."

At a Meeting at Ballingarry in the same county, on the 20th, it was

"Resolved—That it appears to this Meeting, that in the parish of Ballingarry, the lower orders of the inhabitants are in great distress for want of food and seed potatoes, and that fifty families of the town of Ballingarry are in the utmost distress for provisions, and unable to procure employment.

"Resolved—That it appears to us that the united parishes of Cloneagh and Clonelty, adjoining hereto, are also in great distress for want of food, and there being no resident clergy or gentleman therein, we feel it our duty to take charge of said union."

REMARKS OF CORRUPTION.

Fearful as we are lest the words "Irish distress," from daily repetition, should at last be heard only, not heeded, yet, while such distressing facts continue to be disclosed, as we have laid before our

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readers in a preceding column; we cannot, we will not, abstain from continuing our efforts to animate the benevolence of our countrymen.

The testimonies to our exertions in the Irish Journals, of all parties, though they greatly overrate whatever services we may have rendered, are a proof, however, that we have been able to do something, and shall become a motive for our striving to do more.

Alas, never had we a task more painfully easy to perform! We need but bid our readers peruse the sad details of human misery which we have collected together, and what can language do to heighten the appalling picture? What modes of expression, what strain of impassioned eloquence could reach the heart more surely, than the simple recital of the following lamentable truths contained in the printed Report of a Committee appointed to inquire into the condition of the suffering peasantry in the county of Mayo? Referring to a list of the names of resident Gentlemen, from whom they received information, the Report thus proceeds:

"'They concur in most afflicting statements of the wretchedness of the peasantry, and place beyond the slightest doubt the melancholy fact that very many thousands of our poor countrymen, in that county, are at this moment actually enduring all the horrors of starvation and malignant disease. The High Sheriff states, that a very malignant fever is making rapid strides in several districts; and that he has seen *hundreds of wretches greedily seeking for water-cresses, wild mustard, nettle tops, dwarf thistles, or dandelion, all the Spring.* Mr. Joseph Mac Donnell states, that the people are emaciated; that some have been excited by hunger to plunder for provisions, and have carried off the young lambs from the fields for food. Mr. Strickland represents the Typhus fever to be extending rapidly, and the villages and roads crowded with beggars *evidently starving.* Others represent the peasantry on the coast as utterly destitute, and endeavouring to subsist on shell-fish and sea-weed!!!"

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is this state of suffering, or is it not, one which requires persuasion or exhortation to make men feel what they should? Who can hear of thousands and tens of thousands of their fellow-creatures reduced to this pitiable extremity, and not himself be one of tens of thousands eager to offer the generous tribute of his awakened sympathy? But we have yet more touching appeals to make. The Report from which the above extract has been taken, thus concludes:—

"The Rev. J. Seymour, Rector of Ballaghaderrine, and Chairman of a local Committee formed in that town, in his letter, dated May 22d, states—'No pen can describe the state of misery and despair to which the unfortunate victims of starvation are driven.'"

"The Rev. W. R. Smith, Minister of Castlebar, and one of the Secretaries to the local fund of that town, writes, May 21—'The misery of the poor here *is hourly increasing*. A family last week, in their last extremity, seized on a sheep in a neighbouring field, killed it, and devoured part, and carried the remainder to the owner. A similar case occurred this week, with regard to a pig. *I have, myself, seen several persons falling down, faint through weakness from want of food.* Our local Subscription, the first entered into in the County, has already amounted to above 220*l.* and out of this scanty fund we give relief to 2000 famishing souls, at the rate of half a pound of meal per day, and that sold at the third of what we buy it for; but, even this, I do most solemnly, as a Clergyman, declare, does not give relief to the one-tenth of the misery that hourly presented itself to our view."

"In concluding this heart-rending Report, and in order to furnish all the alleviation of such frightful miseries that this Committee can provide, we beg leave most respectfully to suggest, and to urge, that the largest contribution that your funds could afford be forthwith remitted to the county of Mayo, in such sums as will ensure the most beneficial distribution. *For we declare it in the most solemn manner, to be our conscientious conviction, founded upon the diligent perusal of the communications of your Correspondents, that*

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we UNDERRATE *the extent of the calamity when we estimate that not less* THAN SEVENTY THOUSAND of our fellow-creatures, inhabitants of the County of Mayo, being less than a fourth of its population, *are utterly destitute of food or the means of obtaining it.* That a large portion of that number has been in that deplorable condition of dependence upon public benevolence for more than a month past, and that the entire number must continue thus dependent for eight weeks to come, at the least; at the same time that many thousands of them are pining away under the grievous aggravations of malignant disease."

Gracious God! Seventy thousand human beings, dependent upon casual bounty for just so much food as will save them from famishing! Oh! if we *could* individualize this mass of misery! If we *could* picture to ourselves, with adequate distinctness, the maddening anguish, the heart-sick agony of a parent who hears his children wailing around him for food—who sees them pine and languish beneath his eyes, and almost prays for that dispensation of Providence, which only such suffering could rob of its terrors—if we *could* imagine the frantic bitterness of feeling which a state like this must produce, how poor, how feeble, in comparison, would be any attempt to describe it. How unnecessary such an attempt to call forth the required relief!—Yet, when we read of seventy thousand persons enduring famine, let us not forget that if we could survey the miserable whole, we should behold hundreds upon hundreds of such scenes; and it is only by endeavouring to bring the pictures of domestic suffering thus singly before us, that we can duly estimate the aggregate calamity.

Are there any of our readers who stand appalled at the bare idea of seventy thousand fellow creatures thus circumstanced? What will be their dismay, then, when they learn that TENFOLD that number does not exceed the melancholy truth? We have now lying before us a letter from W. L. HANBURY, Esq., the Secretary to the London Committee for Irish Relief, addressed to Messrs. CAVENAGH, BROWNE and Co., of Bath, acknowledging a further remittance of

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800*l.* through their hands from that city. In that letter is the following sentence:—"Our subscriptions amount to about fifty thousand pounds; but, from the zeal expressed from the various chief towns in England, we trust the increase will be very *great*, as it is computed near EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND souls will depend on us *for the next four months.*

Not one word more will we add. Every one knows now what there is to do, and we feel well assured that this knowledge alone is necessary. IT WILL BE DONE.

RELIEF

OF THE IRISH POOR.

A Meeting of the County of Cork was held on the 22d instant, when a Central Committee was appointed to communicate with the Government and the English Committee, and to alleviate the distress of the poor by providing them employment. A Meeting of the City of Cork was also held on the 21st instant, at which resolutions were passed to promote the same object.

The 79th Regiment (stationed at Templemore Barracks, Limerick,) and the King's Own Borderers (Belfast Barracks,) have subscribed one day's pay for the relief of the suffering poor.

The Bank of Ireland has given 500*l.* The Contractors of the Lottery have given a ticket, in quarters of different numbers. The subscription list in the County of Kerry already amounts to upwards of 2,000*l.* In Belfast, 1,400*l.* have been collected.

On Saturday, a subscription was opened in the town of Sligo. Mr. Cooper, the Member for the County, subscribed 100*l.*

Mr. Walker and the inhabitants of Fermoy, have given 300*l.*

In Galway 900*l.* have been collected, of which sum twenty guineas were from the 57th regiment.

A meeting was held at Youghall, on the 18th, when 200*l.* were instantly registered.

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On the 4th of June a ball and concert, under the patronage of the Hon. Mrs. Dashwood, will take place at Plymouth Dock, in aid of the subscription on foot in that town.

A subscription has been opened at the Lewes old Bank.

The amount of the funds raised in Worcester, up to Friday last, was 400*l.*

A meeting of the inhabitants of Preston is announced for Wednesday next.

A meeting was held at Swansea on Monday last, and a subscription set on foot.

WINCHESTER, MAY 25.—A meeting of the inhabitants of this city and vicinity was convened by the Mayor, at the Guildhall on Saturday last, to promote a subscription in aid of the distressed peasantry of Ireland. We understand that subscriptions have been very general. Lady Holland, of Cranbury Park, near this city, has transmitted 100*l.* to the Committee for Managing the Subscription for the distressed Poor in Ireland.—*Winchester Journal.*

NEWPORT, MAY 25.—A numerous meeting of the inhabitants of this town and vicinity was on Monday held at the Guildhall, for the purpose of opening a subscription. Nearly 300*l.* were instantly subscribed.—*Idem.*

WEYMOUTH, MAY 25.—A subscription amounting to upwards of 200*l.* has been made for the poor in Ireland.—*Idem.*

We rejoice to state that the subscription for the relief of the distresses in Ireland for this town and neighbourhood continues to be most liberally supported. A second remittance of one hundred pounds has been sent to the London Committee.—*Windsor Express.*

On Sunday last a sermon was preached at St. Mary's church by the Rev. H. H. Milman, in aid of the fund for relieving the distresses in Ireland, and the collection at the

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church doors amounted to upwards of ninety pounds.—*Reading Journal.*

A subscription for the relief of the poor starving inhabitants of the South of Ireland has been opened this day, (21st May,) in Elgin, with every prospect of success.—*Inverness Courier.*

On Thursday last, a meeting was held at Newcastle, and some liberal contributions were instantly registered.

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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NOTIFICATION

TO THE

READERS OF THE REGISTER.

It has been found, that, in some places, in the country, the Register does not find its way punctually and *regularly*; and, especially, at so *early a time as it might be received*. Until the late regulation, the Country-Booksellers were to charge 6½*d.* for the Register, in order to cover the expense of *package*, and of *carriage* by coach. But, it having been found, that, notwithstanding this, there was great *delay* in the dispatching of the Register from London by some of the persons who purchased it to send to the country; a great many complaints of this sort having been received at the Office, the publisher resolved *to pay the carriage out of his own pocket*, and to send directly from the Office to all those Country-Booksellers that might choose to send him their orders; and, by these means, to secure, as far as he was able, an early arrival in the country, while, at the same time, the readers in the country would have to pay sixpence, instead of sixpence halfpenny, for each Register.—This regulation has, in most cases, produced the best possible effects; namely, an early and regular arrival, and a great *increase of sale*. But, in one particular instance, the complaints of *late* and *irregular* arrival continue; for "*remedy whereof*," as Lawyer Scarlett had it in his famous, though unfortunate, Bill, the publisher has to state as follows: That the Register

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is always ready to be *dispatched from London on the Friday*; that, of course, it may be at *Bath*, for instance, on the Saturday morning; that it is now actually ready for delivery at Bristol, Norwich, Manchester, and many other places equally distant on the Saturday. Therefore, if there be any place, where the readers are not regularly supplied, *the cause must lie with the Country-Bookseller*. This being the case, the publisher points out, what he deems a complete remedy. *Booksellers* and *Stationers* are, in some places, so far *dependent* on the Tithe and Taxeaters as to make them afraid to sell the Register. When we consider, that, including the sums paid to, or allowed to be kept back by, the Taxgatherers, the Tithes and Taxes now amount to about *seventy millions* a-year; or, enough to maintain *eleven millions and a half of people*, at five to a family, and allowing to each family *thirty pounds a-year!* When this is the case; and when it is so notorious, that *all*, yea *all*, those who share this immense sum amongst them, *must* detest the Register and endeavour to prevent it from being read, and this, too, for the plainest reason in the world, namely, because if it were generally read, this immense sum could not be thus raised and thus used; when this is the case, the wonder is, that any *Bookseller* at all can be found to sell the Register, seeing that those who live on the Tithes and Taxes are, and must be, almost the only persons that have *any money to buy large books with*. In many places, some time ago, the booksellers were *threatened*, and compelled, to save themselves from loss of business and from ruin to desist. Therefore, resort must be had to some other person. A *shoemaker*, made of good stuff, is generally to be found. At any rate, some shopkeeper, who loves truth and shames the Devil and does not depend on the taxeating tribe, can be found in every town, however small; and, there seldom wants *now*, in every town, some man of property to wish to give

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the Register circulation. If he have read it himself, he well knows, that a *general reading of it* is all that is wanted to insure the accomplishment of its great objects, a deliverance of England from ruin to men of property, and from pauperism and misery to the labouring classes. To *read* all men but taxeaters and ideots are now willing enough; but, to *get the thing* is not always easy. If any Gentleman wishes to see the Register sold in any town, and will first engage some one to sell it, and then write to the publisher, recommending such person, some *Registers*, some *Farmer's Friend*, some *Farmer's Wife's Friend*, and so on, shall be sent. The person recommended will then *write* to the Office himself, and say what he has sold, and *what he shall want in future*. There will be *no responsibility* on the part of the Gentleman who gives the recommendation. The loss cannot be much. It will soon be seen, whether the vendor be punctual in his payments. For a little while we will receive back that which is not sold; and, afterwards, the seller will order no more than what he may regularly want. A large *placard* will be sent down with the *first parcel* to be put up on the house of the seller, notifying *that he sells Mr. Cobbett's publications*. In market-towns the seller may send a boy into the Market, on the market-days; and also to *Fairs;* and he may sell the little pamphlets there. There is a boy in London, who gets from the Office hundreds at a time of the *Farmer's Friend* and of the *Farmer's Wife's Friend*, which he carries to *Mark-lane*, and to as many of the markets and fairs near London as he is able to go to.—Thus the publisher has, he thinks, pointed out the effectual and *easy* means of securing a regular supply of the Register without a stamp. If the reader be so situated as to make it impossible for him to get the unstamped Register, the *stamped* one, at 1*s.* goes by *post*, and free of postage.—The

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profit to sellers is such, that, in any considerable town, a little shopkeeper, or a labourer, might easily make out of it 2*s.* or 4*s.* a-week clear.—Small coach parcels are dearer, as to carriage, than large ones; and, if *very small*, the carriage comes to as much as the pamphlets. At first a trifling loss of this sort will not be minded; but, for a constancy, we cannot pay the carriage upon a parcel, the amount of which is less than *eight shillings*.—Every Gentleman, who may be disposed to write to the Office on these matters will meet with immediate attention. Only a little, and a very little, trouble, taken by *one man*, may set a whole district right as to the causes of their sufferings. If *every man* thought rightly as to these subjects, there would soon be an end of the sufferings themselves. We only want to be *unanimous*, or nearly so. If all farmers and tradesmen were as well-informed and as zealous as the Reformers of the North, matters would soon be put to rights. If we had a member of parliament to *speak* to the people, there would need no pamphlets. But, we have no such member; and, it is pretty clear, that, till the parliament be reformed, we never shall have one. To the press, therefore, we must look; and, those who think, that the Register, if generally read, would tend to produce that which we stand in need of, now know in what way they can, with very little trouble to themselves, assist in promoting its circulation.

NOTICE

To COUNTRY-BOOKSELLERS.

It happens, in some cases, that those Booksellers, in the country, who have weekly parcels of the Register sent to them, also wish to have parcels of *other pamphlets* sent *with the Register;* and, it may possibly have happened, that, in consequence of our late regulation, the Country-Booksellers have experienced some delay in

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the receipt of those *other pamphlets*. Now, though this is really no affair of ours; though our regulations arose out of the fact, that ours *was not regularly sent to the country*; and though the proof of the injury that this did to the Register has now become so manifest in the great increase of sale which the regular sending has produced; still, in order to oblige the Country-Booksellers, the publisher of the Register makes them an offer as follows:—He will receive from the publishers of *other pamphlets*, any parcels, completely packed up and *sealed*, that may be brought to him, at, or before, *twelve o'clock* on any Friday; and he will enclose them in his parcels; the said publishers paying him a due proportion of the expense of carriage and of booking. He wants to get no *profit* or *advantage* of any sort from those *other pamphlets*. Those booksellers, therefore, who may wish to have those other pamphlets conveyed to them through this channel, will, of course, give their directions to their London correspondents accordingly; but, they will please to consider, what numbers of parcels there are to be prepared at our Office on the Friday, and take particular notice, that, unless the parcels to be enclosed be received by, or before, *twelve o'clock* on that day, it must depend on accident, whether they be sent or not.—This is an *experiment* merely to oblige the Country-Booksellers. If we find the parcels of *other pamphlets* arrive *late*; or, if any other great inconvenience should, upon trial, be found to arise out of the thing, we shall be obliged to give it up, and to attend merely to the safe and regular sending of our own publications.—We ought to notice, that, it may *possibly* happen, once in a very long time, as it did last week, that the Register will not go off to every place on the Friday. The Rustic Harangue was closed, at Farnham, at about *four o'clock on Thursday*; the reporter of that Ha-

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rangue had to bring his Notes *forty miles*, then to *write forty columns of the Register*, all which had to be printed, and the pamphlets folded and stitched, before any could be sent off. The whole was in print in about *fourteen hours* after the four o'clock at Farnham. But it was not done quite soon enough to send off *all* the Friday's parcels; yet, they had at Norwich, Bristol, Manchester, and Leeds, on the *Saturday*, what was spoken at Farnham on the *Thursday at four o'clock*.—We state this as an instance; but, it is evident, that such cases can rarely occur.

To Mr. KNOWLES,

OF THURSLEY, IN THE COUNTY OF SURREY.

On the approaching discussion relative to Peel's Bill, and on the prospects of Farmers, Landlords and Parsons, particularly in relation to the Claims of the Labourers.

Kensington, June 3, 1822.

Sir,

I can say nothing, or very little, upon the above subjects, that can be of much use to you, who understand all these matters as well as I do; which is, indeed, the case with all those who have been readers of the Register for the last eight or nine years. But, your name gives a *name* to this pamphlet; and, I find great use in these names: they distinguish clearly one Register from another, and, thereby, not only assist my own memory as well as that of the readers in general, but save writing and space when I have references to make. I offer no apology for making use of *your* name for this purpose. It is of some service to me and the public, and it can neither pick your pocket nor break your leg.

Before I enter on my subjects, let me make a call upon all those, who, like you, understand them so well, to think a little of their duty towards *others*, who are, as yet, comparatively uninformed with regard to them. It is in vain for us to hope for any *peaceable* settlement of things, unless the great body of the people be *well-informed* as to the great causes of our present distress and our gradually approaching decline and fall as a nation. Those who possess this information ought, therefore, to use all the means in their power for causing others to

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possess it. No one will deny that I have done my duty in this way, with both tongue and pen; and that I have done it, too, not only without any particular interest of my own to urge me on; but manifestly in the teeth of my own particular interest. I state this, not in the way of taking merit to myself; but in the way of rebuke to those who have neglected to do any thing in the public cause, though they might have done it, with the greatest ease in the world, without the smallest risk of injury to themselves. There are not a few of such persons, who, though very well convinced, that a Reform of the Parliament was absolutely necessary to the safety of the country, have, nevertheless, drawn themselves into their shells, lying silent, snug and safe, while they saw, without attempting to lend us a helping hand, or to give us a cheering sound, the storm, the violence, the virulence, the thunder and lightning of corruption pelting down upon us, and laying us prostrate and leaving us for dead. I, who have survived this terrible storm, while I feel the most ardent attachment to those who showed themselves men during that storm, will by no means disguise, that towards those of a different description my feelings are of a very different nature; and as to those who have showed hostility towards us, who have reviled us as persons aiming at plunder and devastation; who have brandished us with the vilest of names, and have ascribed to us the basest of motives, but who now are suffering from the workings of that infamous corruption to which we would have put an end if we could; as to these men, these detestable instruments of cowardice and cruelty, I must confess, and I am forward to confess, I glory in proclaiming, that their sufferings give me pleasure far greater than it is in my power to express.

As to the main body, however, of those that are now suffering, particularly amongst the farming classes, their fault has been that of *inactivity*; that of a want of coming forward to our support. This fault I make due allowance for, too. The persons of this description, to whom I more particularly allude, have been misled, as to two points. First, they were made to believe that the paper-money, the loans, and the enormous expenditure; that standing armies in time of peace; that military academies, that barracks and arsenals and depôts and round towers and telegraph-houses and whiskers and copper heels to

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boots; that these and a great many other things that might be mentioned were all necessary to the well-being and honour of the country. And in the second place, they were made to believe, that we who disliked these things; that we who petitioned against these things; that we who detested and abominated all the outlandish tricks and contrivances that had changed the very look of England, were sighing for anarchy and confusion, wanted to destroy all order and all law, and, as we were expressly charged in the Report of the two Committees in 1817, with a wish to have a general scramble, and to get the property of the rich into our possession. By representations like these the main part of the middle class of society, particularly that most efficient class the occupiers of the land, were deluded; and though they were, doubtless, frequently shocked at the terrible punishments inflicted on us, their feelings were blunted by the reflection that those punishments were *necessary to their own safety*. They felt for us as they feel for young men and women who are executed for forgery: they felt sorrow at our fate; sorrow for our distressed and ruined families; but justified themselves in their own minds for not reviling our persecutors; because they deemed our punishment *necessary to their own safety*.

Now, how is the scene changed! That *safety* which they then so much valued, is now found to be totally at an end for ever, unless it be restored to them by the adoption of those very measures, the seeking for which constituted our *crimes!* This is a strange change indeed; and it was only because I foresaw that this change would come, that I was induced to persevere for the far greater part of the period during which the country has witnessed that perseverance. I have been charged with *ambitious views:* ambitious views are in themselves not criminal: they are criminal only when intended to be accomplished by unjustifiable means. I have entertained no views which I did not think tended to the happiness and honour of my country. If I have wished to be in parliament, it has been with no other view than that of promoting that interest and that honour. By the unanimous feeling of *all* the factions; the Pittites, the Whigs, and the faction of Burdett, not less malignant than either of the other two, and a surprising deal more hypocritical than either, *I am where I am*, to which let me add, and that, too, with as much

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glee as heart ever felt, THEY ARE WHERE THEY ARE, and they are, too, and let the nation bear it in mind, where they would not have been, and where they could not have been, if I had been, only for the two last years, *speaking to the whole nation*, instead of writing to a comparatively very small part of it.

There they are, then! Look at them and see what a figure they make! To describe their situation is absolutely beyond the power of man; and yet they are only entering upon those scenes which are to lead to the catastrophe that is to render their disgrace and my triumph a great and interesting subject with your and my children's children.

Such is the result of the delusion spread abroad by more than three hundred periodical publications, besides about a hundred volumes of speeches, during the last twenty years. I am, therefore disposed to feel a good deal of indulgence towards the deluded part of the community. Provided, however, that the deluded persons have not also been *persecutors*; and provided, also that they now bestir themselves in the discharge of their duty. If they now act the part of men, their past coldness and indifference ought to be forgotten, and forgiven. And, let all whom it may concern bear in mind, that, as to *myself*, I would not now rise up from this table to accept of a seat in parliament for any Borough, City or County in the kingdom, unless upon the footing of a complete and efficient reform. I wish to stand as I am, and see into what a state these three factions will bring the nation, without any the smallest interference of mine. I very much wished to be in the House of Commons from the year 1812 to last year. I know I could have prevented a great part of the sufferings which have befallen the nation. But, the hour of prevention is now passed. It is now too late for the propositions that I intended to make. Your remedy must change with the changes in the disease; and I have no taste for having my plans mutilated by emergencies that shall have arisen subsequent to their formation. I offered myself to Honiton sixteen years ago; to Hampshire ten years ago; for Westminster I always might have been chosen during the last fourteen years; I offered myself for Coventry at the very time of all times when my services were most wanted, and besides the efforts of the rich ruffians of that place, I

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had to contend against the London canvassing of the at once most sly and most stupid and most idolized reptile that ever crawled the face of this earth, belonging to that faction which may well be called the *do-nothing* faction; but which has contrived, by hook or by crook, to have every fool in this kingdom on its side.

There they have them, then, *Peter Moore* and *Edward Ellice*, to carry the vessel through the storm! And here am I on the shore witnessing their blunders, seeing the sails torn to rags, seeing the helm twisted to and fro, without why or wherefore, in their unskilful and feeble hands, seeing their affrighted and stupid looks: and if I do hear the cries of the passengers my heart tells me at every cry that I hear, that the fault is not mine, but that of the passengers themselves.

I have been involuntarily led into these remarks with regard to myself: but, I feel at the same time that they demand no apology, seeing that my name is become identified with that set of principles, the acting upon which would have saved the nation. It is become a duty towards the country much more than towards myself to keep the public reminded of these things. Men must ask themselves this question: "*What would now have been the state of men's minds if Mr. Cobbett had not written at all?*" They must also ask themselves this other question: "*What would have been the consequence had he for the last thirteen years been speaking to the whole nation that which he has written to a few persons?*" Those that have read it will ask, "*Is it possible that this suffering could have been experienced if Paper against Gold had been spoken to the whole nation in* 1811*?*" And then they will ask how it has come to pass that a Douglas Kinnaird, who has been in Parliament for years without the people knowing it; that the insignificant son of an everlasting placeman; that an any-thing; that a *no-matter-what* should have been hunted about after by the big talking and little doing Patriot, in order to be crammed into a seat for Westminster by the means of an intriguing, grovelling set of wretches called a Rump Committee; while at the same time, that big talking Patriot was stunning us with a noise equal to that of forge hammers, about Parliamentary Reform and Purity of Election. A "*compromise;*" a compromise with this faction, the most malig-

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nant of all, and really as corrupt in the motive as the worst! Let those who think of such a thing come but to London for one winter, and they will see how despicable the faction, and how inexpressibly foolish the idea of a compromise with it. Peel's Bill, however, has disconcerted even this hypocritical faction, who never wished for a Reform any more than the fish in your ponds wish for the drawing off of the water. Peel's Bill is rousing the Yeomanry and farmers into activity. It will compel the Landlords to seek a reform in order to save their last acre; and when that reform comes, come when it may, you will see, and mark my words, this faction, with all its big talk and all its bundles of professions, sink into insignificance as complete as the forlorn wretches that now pick their meals from the gutter and deprive the pigs of their morning repast. It is at present supported, and that too, in mere outside appearance, by a species of jugglery that would disgrace mountebanks and pickpockets; but let Peel's Bill only work on to its natural results, and this faction is blown away as the zephyr clears your bent-fields of the deleterious dust. The scythe of Reform will bring down the whole crop of corruption, but the previous breezes will clear away, never to be more heard of, this noisy, hypocritical and despicable faction.

I now come to the proposed subjects of my letter; and first I have to offer you some remarks on the approaching discussion relative to Peel's Bill. From what I have already said, and, indeed, so many times over, you will easily imagine that I do not wish that Mr. Western's motion should succeed in any degree. I have before shown in my letter to Lord Lansdowne, the injustice that must be done if this Bill were repealed. I have stated also, in my last Register (the rustic harangue at Farnham) the strong motives for refusing to enact such repeal, amongst which I did not forget to include the shocking mortification of really enacting and proclaiming to the world a triumph so marked and complete to me, William Cobbett. Still there remains to be pointed out to you; or, at least, to the public at large, some of the reasons which will prevent those who have the power, from repealing this Bill.

Self-preservation is the first law of nature; and according to this maxim, the Landlords will

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be ready to make any sacrifice, and will think very little of mere shame and disgrace, in order to save their estates. If a man break his leg, and a mortification be apprehended, he will take the assistance of a Surgeon that has even cuckolded him, rather than lose his life. The main body of the Landlords, and especially those who have the insolence to call themselves the "*higher orders*," hate me a considerable deal more than a thief hates a constable; and we know very well that a thief who is like to be drowned in a water-scuffle with a constable, will call upon the latter for his assistance, though, in all human probability, he obtains, thereby, only a swing in preference to a duck. The Landlords, therefore, if they could all see their danger at once, and the full extent of that danger, would have no scruple about the means of effecting their escape. But, in the first place, they do not all see their danger; much less do the main part of them see it to its full extent. You, who read the Register, are apt to think that every body else reads it, and especially all those whose very morsel of bread is involved on the issue to which its writings relate. The fact is that not more, probably, than a fiftieth part of the Landlords ever saw the Register, strange as that may appear to you. They have no knowledge of these matters but that which they pick up here and there out of newspapers, and out of parliamentary speeches. The former, if they had been established for the express purpose, could not, generally speaking, have been better calculated to deceive them; to lead them along from error to error, and to put a confused mass of nonsense in their minds. Little better is that which they can have derived from speeches in parliament; so that, as to the main body of them, the Laplanders are as well acquainted with the causes of the present monstrous appearances as they are. And, as to the extent of the danger, as to total loss of estate, though the thing has been proved so clearly and so many times, the very idea is such a stranger to their minds, that they have only still to see the parchment in their possession to deprive them of even the capacity of entertaining the notion of loss of the estate, not at all perceiving that an estate without rent is in fact no estate at all. But, indeed, to what an extent must they be ignorant when they can seriously set themselves

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to work to combat the evil, as they call it, of the poor rates, while the fundholders have actually a mortgage upon their lands to an amount far exceeding the rental; and when they are induced to to believe that it is necessary *for their own good* to give these fundholders, under the name of Sinking Fund, five millions a-year over and above the utmost interest to which these latter can have a right to pretend, or any colour of justification to demand.

Besides this profound ignorance in the main body of the Landlords, you will please to observe that there is one description of them, who do not suffer like the rest. I mean the *Boroughmen* and all those connected with or at all related to the Boroughmen. All this description of Landlords are upon the whole profiting, perhaps; really *gaining* by the change which has taken place in the value of money. Suppose you, or, which will be more decorous, suppose me to be a Boroughman. Suppose my estates in land to have brought me hitherto twenty thousand pounds a-year, and suppose me and my family to have, besides, been and to be, receiving out of the system, thirty thousand pounds a-year. I now get no rents; but we get amongst us the thirty other thousand pounds a-year, and that will buy us as great a quantity of good things as about eighty thousand pounds a-year would have bought us before. So that here am I a gainer; though I lose all my rents, I am a gainer by twenty or thirty thousand pounds a-year. I know that the poor devils of little landlords, and big landlords, too, who are not sharing with me in the receipts of the system must go to ruin. But you know what a Boroughman is I suppose, and knowing that, I need not tell you that he cares not who sinks so long as he swims. You know, also, that a boroughman has not only numerous hands to grasp with; but that he has also numerous voices to speak with; and that, though all the voices do not speak a great deal, they utter short words, and words very much to the purpose. Were the boroughmen to reflect a little, they would discover that their turn must come at last; but the far greater part of them never reflect till they feel, and never feel for others till they have felt a long time for themselves.

Now, on persons of this description the statements of Mr. Western will produce no effect. He will exhibit his pictures of distress in

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vain to them. They know no distress. Their dinners are grander and their balls more splendid than ever. It is all the same to them whether they have a troop of little landlords, or a troop of stock-jobbers at their heels. To tell them that two-thirds of the farmers in the fine county of Essex are insolvent is no more than to tell them that two-thirds of the grasshoppers or the frogs are ready to perish from the drought of the season. They will be told by their instruments, that, to repeal the Bill of Peel, would be to give a terrible blow to the system; and they will take special care that, as long as they can help it, that system shall not receive a blow.

Besides this there are some of the Boroughmen, and some of the other big Landlords, who have enormous sums of money in what are called the Funds; and I have observed that people who have money in the funds always think more of that than they do of any other species of property. The interest is regularly paid; and they seem to enjoy it the more because they feel that it is paid to them out of their neighbours' pockets, and to the loss and injury of their neighbours. The funding system has in it every thing that is unnatural and base, and, amongst other things, it has the capacity of inspiring this species of malignant satisfaction. The fundholders, who are such by choice, look upon themselves as united with the Government. They regard as their enemies every one that breathes even a whisper against the powers that be; and they would see half the nation slaughtered, rather, not than lose their dividends, for they would see the whole world, their own fathers and mothers included, slaughtered before they would lose them or any part of them; but they would see half the nation slaughtered, rather than they would see the Government put into a fright, or see any risk of their losing a thousandth part of a thousandth per cent. of interest. My opinion is, that a thorough-paced fundholder would not hesitate a moment at seeing the country conquered and its very name taken away, if he were told that he should thereby avoid the risk of losing only a farthing upon a hundred pounds of his interest. It is the basest crew that ever disgraced the earth; and, therefore, if a boroughman, or any other big landlord, be a big fundholder, too, what sort of mercy is he to be expected to have upon the little landlords or upon any

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other part of the people? What does such a man as this care about two-thirds of the farmers of Essex being insolvent?

Add to this that many of the big fundholders have, within a few years, become boroughmen, and, of course, they have a great deal to say in the matter. There will be nothing but the poor part of the landlords to complain, and the arguments of poverty are seldom very cogent. The whole body of fundholders, placemen and pensioners, and particularly boroughmen, must be opposed to the repeal of Peel's Bill; and, therefore, all that the discussion will produce will be a large quantity of useless weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The prospect, then, of the Farmers, Landlords, and Parsons may be looked upon as moderately dismal, particularly in relation to the claims of the labourers, usually denominated, poors' rates. Indeed these claims ought not to be called poors' rates. It is so much money which is thus taken from the rent and tithe and from the farmers' capital to make up the deficiency of wages, necessary to enable the labourer to pay taxes. Malt being six or seven shillings a bushel, for instance, instead of being half-a-crown, the labourer must pay four shillings more for the bushel of malt than he would otherwise have to pay. The farmer keeps the wages as low as possible, and employs as few hands as possible; but still the people must be fed. They must *live*. By some means or other there must be food for them; for, as we have seen in the case of the Irish, even if there be no poor laws, as is the case in Ireland, money must be raised by subscription; and at last the people must be fed; for if not fed, they will help themselves, it being full as well to be hanged and better to be transported, than to be starved to death; for when a man is hanged for robbery a coffin is found him at the public expense.

Nothing can be more clear than that the whole of the people of a country must live upon the produce of a country. It is best when they live upon their own private property and out of their own earnings; but if a very large part, if the community earn nothing, and possess no land or any other thing that can be taxed, and have to live on the produce of taxes, it is evident that the proprietors of land must contribute towards the maintenance of this large body that do nothing, seeing that the labourer has nothing to

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spare; seeing that he has and can have no more out of his own earnings than is required for his own support. If the taxgatherers went at once to the Landlord and took that rent which the farmer had been accustomed to pay him, the operation would be simple and easily understood. In our complicated way of going on, the taxgatherer goes to the malthouse, the brewhouse, the chandlers-shop and so forth, and there he raises taxes; but these taxes have to be paid by the farmer himself for his own consumption, by the innumerable traders and dealers that he has to purchase from, and especially by his labourers. If all these taxes were done away with, and the taxgatherer went at once for the rent, the most stupid Landlord would understand it. Yet, is it not evident enough that if the money for all these taxes come originally from the pocket of the farmer; that is to say, out of the produce of the farm, there can be very little left to be paid in the shape of rent?

It is not, therefore, an outcry against the poor and against poor-rates that we ought to hear from the Landlords; but a cry against these same taxes. But, say they, the poor will have all our land away from us. The poor want none of your land, nor of your houses nor any thing else. They only want a sufficiency of wages to buy them a sufficiency of food and of raiment; and if they have not this in the shape of wages, they must have it in the shape of poor-rates, if poor-rates the Landlords will insist upon calling them. They ought to call them wages-tax, or fund-tax, or army-tax, or Waterloo-tax; for they are not poor-taxes. They are so much money paid to make up the deficiency of wages, which deficiency is caused by the taxes paid to the Government. This is the straight forward view of the matter; and if every farmer in England saw it in this light, how quickly we should be all of a mind, and how soon should we have that Reform without which there can be no diminution of these intolerable burdens. For want of seeing the thing in this light, the Farmers have kept crying aloud against the poor-rates. Some alteration was wanted in the poor-laws. Something was wanted to be done to check the increase of the poor. They never call for any thing to check the increase of taxes. They never call upon the Government not to spend eight hundred millions of money for

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the purpose of bringing the Americans under a taxing system as well as themselves, and for that of restoring the Old Bourbons against the will of the French. No: it was the poor laws that were in fault. They wanted altering. Malthus, too, was set to work; and, at any rate, one *salutary* measure was necessary; and the Select Vestry Bill was passed. I am now, therefore, going to give you a specimen of the blessed effects of this Select Vestry Bill. A petition has been presented to the House of Commons *from the Select Vestry* of the parish of *Burwash* in the County of Sussex, and now you shall hear its deplorable story.

"A Petition of the Select Vestry of the parish of Burwash, in the county of Sussex, was presented, and read; setting forth, That the Petitioners most respectfully represent to the House, that the said parish is now in a most distressed state, owing to the ruinous depression in the value of the produce of the soil, which has so impoverished the occupiers that they are now unable to employ the labouring class, who are, in consequence, experiencing great inconvenience, which has caused them to become very dissatisfied and irritable, regardless of advice, disrespectful and insolent to their superiors, riotous and turbulent in their dispositions and behaviour, and appear to be quite ready for extreme acts of desperation; premises and property *have been set fire to*-and otherwise destroyed, *anonymous letters dropt*, threatening the lives of individuals (whom they thought might have influence) if their condition was not amended, frequently most grossly abusive to, and sometimes *assaulting*, the Overseers, if their requests (or in many instances *demands*) were not complied with, and have tumultuously and *stormingly beset the Magistrates on the Bench*, and, in defiance of orders and force to prevent it, have *violently burst into the Sessions Room*, urging their demands, and *rescuing their ringleaders* who had been taken into custody, and from apprehension of similar occurrences, a number of *special Constables* have been sworn in, and *Watch kept to guard against, such is the alarming state in which they are placed*; the population of Burwash is about 1900, and nearly half are receiving relief to a great extent, and a great number of men, fluctuating from 80 to 120, who, together with their families, amounting to between 3 and 400, are now, and have been for many months, entirely out of employ, and solely supported from the funds of the parish; consequently, the Poors' Rates are enormously high and *oppressive*, being upwards of twenty-two shillings in the pound on the full value of rentals of the land, and, from the increased and rapidly increasing distress and reduced means of the farmers, they are unable to meet those unavoidable demands, notwithstanding nearly all other *just calls for payments are of necessity neglected*; the parish of Burwash, as well as its bounding parishes, is entirely agricultural, *without any sort of manufactory*, its population *only slowly and gradually increasing*, yet the *Poors' Rates*, with *other demands* on the land, have so advanced as to threaten ultimately to *destroy entirely the landlords' interest*, as it appears by the following statement:

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Sums collected for the poor annually.

Year.	£.	s.	d.
1772 . . .	438	0	0
1782 . . .	545	2	10
1792 . . .	636	14	0
1821 . . .	4149	6	6

These facts are represented to show to the House the state and condition, as well as the disposition, of the poor of that place and neighbourhood; the Petitioners again beg to assure the House, that it is with the *utmost deference and respect* they state their well-grounded fears and apprehensions that if some means are not speedily adopted to arrest the ruinous progress now making on the interest of the soil, the worst of evils must shortly ensue, the land will, by necessity, *be thrown out of cultivation*, the poor totally unemployed, and, as they must be without the aid of parochial relief, *as no rates can then be collected, anarchy and confusion* must follow; the Petitioners therefore pray the most serious attention of the House to these matters."

This is a pretty picture of things existing under a Government that is the envy of surrounding nations and admiration of the world. The closing part is particularly touching; for, here you will see that "*anarchy and confusion are apprehended;*" not from Jacobins and Radicals; but from causes manifesty arising out of a system intended to keep down those Jacobins and Radicals! Why, in the memorable year 1817, we were accused of endeavours to produce "*anarchy and confusion.*" This is the old charge that has been vomited forth against us by knaves in London and sputtered out at us by great slavering ideots from the country for the last thirty years. Nay, these last-mentioned beastly wretches whooped and hallooed for war and taxes and standing armies and German troops, to prevent "anarchy and confusion." The Select Vestries themselves were contrived for the express purpose of promoting *order* and regularity in parish proceedings; and here, in a time of profound peace, and after endless glories in victories over Jacobins and Radicals; and after the passing of Six Acts too, we have a Select Vestry full of apprehensions of approaching "anarchy and confusion." Gentlemen of the Select Vestry of Burwash, you cried aloud for war; you had it. You wanted a triumph over the French Republicans; you had it. You wanted Jubilees and Waterloo rejoicings; you had them. You wanted to shake hands with dear Old Blucher; you did it. You cried "*Orange Boven,*" till we Jacobins were disgusted with the sound. This was having it all your own way. But you must needs think that you would have to *pay* for it; and pay for it you must. The labourers must be

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maintained, to be sure, either in the shape of wages or of rates; and if you want relief for yourselves you must get it from the Government.

It never was yet known, in any country upon earth, that the labouring classes treated the other classes with insolence or disrespect, unless there were some cause or other of ill-will existing. I defy all the travellers that have ever been in the United States of America to say that they ever saw the labouring people insolent or rude. The setting fire to premises, the dropping of anonymous letters, the contempt for magistrates, are things extremely painful to contemplate, and reflect great dishonour upon the country; and are doubly painful and disgraceful amongst a people so famed as the English for a docile submission to the laws; but, when three or four hundred persons in one parish, are destitute of a sufficiency of food and of raiment, the wonder is, not that acts of violence are committed, but that they should ever cease to be committed. It is, in short, a state of things in which it is impossible for order and law to exist.

This Select Vestry of Burwash seem to be quite in the dark yet. They appear to be a very loyal body of men; but seem not to understand the true principles of *loyalty*. They say that "the poor-"rates, with *other demands* on the "land have so advanced as to "threaten ultimately to *destroy* "*entirely the Landlords' interest.*" This, with all due submission to the gentlemen of the Select Vestry of Burwash, shows that they have but very crude notions respecting the Landlord's *title* and *interest*. These, therefore, are to give them to understand, that the Landlord's property, or, rather, his *proprietorship*, is by no means an absolute thing; that it is relative and contingent and conditional; that all possessions of this sort emanated in the first place from, and are still held subject to, the dispensations of the supreme power of the state. That is to say; that farm shall be *yours*, but you shall assist to keep the people from starving out of the produce of that farm, and you shall be subject to such "*other demands*" as may be ordered by the State. This is the true sense and meaning of a title-deed; and if the poor-rates; if that which is wanted to keep the people of a parish from starving and that which those other demands take away; if these two together leave nothing for the landlord; nothing has he a right to

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expect. He has no positive, no absolute right; and if the government leave him too little, let him complain of that, but let him not complain that he is compelled to contribute his share towards preventing the people of the parish from starving. Yet this Select Vestry say not a word about the Government taxes, which they seem to point at, indeed, under the obscure and delicate appellation of "*other demands;*" and even this hint, they beg to assure the House that they give "with "the utmost deference and re-"spect!"

You will recollect that for many years past; for not less than eighteen years; my answer to all the boastings about national prosperity has been, "Look at the poor-"rates; and never tell me of "prosperity with increasing poor-"rates:" Some lying knaves have replied, that this increase of poor-rates has arisen from the *increase of our population.* You have read all the boastings about this increase of population. I have looked well into the subject. The first Return or the second Return must be false; and my sincere belief is, that not a single soul has been added to our population since the reign of Queen Elizabeth. But, at any rate, here we have a parish that we are told has no manufactory, is purely agricultural, and that its population has only slowly increased. Yet, the poor-rates are TEN times as great as they were in the year 1772! Now, it happens likewise that the Government taxes are much about ten times as great as they were in the year 1772; a circumstance of which the Select Vestry gentlemen of Burwash, in the county of Sussex, take no more notice than if it did not in the most distant degree belong to that subject on which they were petitioning the House "with the "utmost deference and respect." Yet, I think that this was a thing to mention to the House. What was so natural as to say, our poor-rates have gone on increasing with the taxes that you have imposed upon us? What so natural as to conclude with an earnest prayer for the removal of those taxes? But this did not suit the Select Vestry of Burwash. They wanted to make out a complaint against the poor; and not a word of reproach do they utter on any body else.

Let me here mention the curious paper given to me in the dining-room at Farnham, by a Gentleman from the parish of Frensham. This Gentleman had, very likely,

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read in the Register what I have often repeated there, that I should be perfectly well satisfied if we were as well off as our Great Grandfathers were. Intending, I suppose, to be amongst the gentlemen to welcome me to my native Town of Farnham, he put in his pocket a paper, which had descended to him from his Great Grandfather, and which he was so kind as to give me. This paper is an account of the receipts and disbursements of his Great Grandfather, as Overseer of the poor of the parish of Frensham in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-two. The money collected by him for the year was twenty-three pounds one penny. The money he received from the late Overseers was two pounds ten shillings and fivepence. The money expended on the poor was eighteen pounds eight shillings and threepence; and his balance in hand was seven pounds two shillings and threepence. The money he expended was in the partial relief of four widows, and in the burial of one of them. The parish of Frensham is, as you well know, altogether agricultural, skirted on one side by the Holt Forest, and on the other by the Heath forming the valley beneath Hindhead. The population can scarcely have increased in any considerable degree, if at all. Frensham is happily situated at a great distance from every thing resembling Manchester, or any other sink of misery and slavery. It can have nothing to puff up its numbers, and all the land near it that was worth cultivating was a royal forest, or a settled inclosure, hundreds of years ago. Yet in this parish, where, in 1682, six years before the glorious Revolution, and twelve years before the adoption of the accursed Dutch system of funding; in that parish where the poor-rates in those happy times, amounted to only eighteen pounds eight shillings and threepence in the year; in that very parish of Frensham they amounted last year to "*fifteen hundred pounds!*" But, and now mark well, how the things tally, the Government taxes in 1682, amounted to little more than *one million;* and last year they amounted, including the expense of collection, to *upwards of sixty millions!*

Will it be said that *prices* were very different then from what they are now? They doubtless were; and very different was the treatment of the unfortunate poor. Almost the whole of the eighteen pounds was expended upon two

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of the widows; and what is very remarkable the expenses of the burial of the one widow, amounted to twenty-three shillings and tenpence, and a gentleman in the room at Farnham told me that the expenses of the burial of a pauper at this time in that country, amounts to only twenty-seven shillings. These facts alone speak volumes to the country and particularly to the Landlords; but where is the man amongst them who will bestir himself to lay these facts before the country at large, and to bring them home to the hearts and minds of the people? Complain of poor rates, indeed! What were eighteen pounds a-year to the parish of Frensham? Less, perhaps than the poor rates of any township of equal population in America now; and much less than the taxes now raised on the people of America were the taxes then raised by the King and Parliament of England. It was in those days that the sayings about *English roast beef* came up, or the world never would have heard of them; it was in those days that *English hospitality* was talked of all over the world, and when the selling of small beer from Bishops' Castles and the Houses of Members of Parliament had never yet been heard of or dreamt of!

To return for a little to the Select Vestry of Burwash in the County of Sussex, you perceive that they harp upon the old string, that the "*land will be thrown out of cultivation.*" These Gentlemen of the Select Vestry mistake the matter greatly; and if they will listen to me a little, I will tell them their fortunes without their crossing my hand. It is very true, that, if things were to go on in the present way for some time longer, Landlords would get no tenants to pay them any rent. Some of them might, thereupon, resolve to let the farms lie unoccupied and running to waste. The chances are that some one would step into an empty house, and make use of the room and of the spontaneous produce of the orchard and so forth. To eject is to take possession; to take possession is to occupy; and to occupy is to be liable to the poor rates. But things would not go to this extent. There is the Government which has to take care of itself; and, long before things came to this pass an Act of Parliament would enable the Overseers in the parishes, destitute of occupiers, to take possession of the unoccupied

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land, and to use it for the benefit of the parish.

The Select Vestry of Burwash may, therefore, be assured, that the Government is to be frightened by no threats about throwing the land out of cultivation. It knows its business much too well for that. It understands pursuing the "*stern path of duty;*" and it knows perfectly well that do what it may, and do others what they may, the people must and will have food; that they will not die by thousands on the highway and under the hedges; and with this I take my leave of the Gentlemen of the Select Vestry of the parish of Burwash.

I have now another petition to which to call your attention, and to beg you to read through. Prepare your muscles for laughter; for though the tale is dismal enough, the notions and language and particularly the *loyalty* of it, are superabundantly ridiculous. This petition is from owners and occupiers of land, as well as the former petition; but this comes from the rich county of Norfolk, and, as the petitioners say, from the richest part of that rich county. Yet they, too, as you will perceive, talk about the land being *thrown out of cultivation:* so that, if the rich land of Norfolk and the poor land of Sussex are to be thrown out of cultivation, it would seem that all corn land is to be thrown out of cultivation. We cannot, like the Russians, tear the carcass to pieces and eat it like dogs; we can eat bread without meat but not meat without bread; so that the pasture land must, of course, follow the arable. And, as it would be impossible to make beer without barley, the hop land can be of no sort of use, and, of course, our Townsmen of Farnham will cut a most deplorable figure. The heaths of our county have long been held in derision by the farmers of Norfolk and of Kent; but, at this rate, we shall beat them after all; for our heath will always be what it always has been. If it has known nothing of "*prosperity,*" it will at least know nothing of "*Agricultural distress;*" and we shall have to boast of the barrenness of our soil, while they will have to blush at the fecundity of theirs. I suppose we shall all become heath-croppers; but that may not be the very worst situation in life; for Mr. CURWEN informs us that a Bishop had discovered, that a very nutritious food might be got out of the bark of trees. Not to detain you any

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longer, from the interesting document that I have to lay before you, I proceed to insert it, with this additional request, that you will read slowly, and bear in mind that this petition comes from a body of most *loyal* men, who condemn all factious opposition to the Government.

"A Petition of the thereunder-signed Owners and Occupiers of lands in the Hundreds of *Tunstead* and *Happing*, in the county of Norfolk, was presented, and read; setting forth, That the Petitioners feel, with the most *acute sensibility*, the deplorable depression of Agricultural Produce, the price whereof, so far from affording a reasonable remuneration to the grower, will not even defray the expenses of proper tillage and cultivation of the soil, and consequently threatens, without speedy relief, to throw a considerable portion of the lands in those Hundreds *out of cultivation*, and the occupiers thereof into a gaol; the Petitioners regret, that, in consequence of this depression, they see the Proprietor *deprived of his rent*, the creditor of his right; and the poor husbandman of the proper reward for his labour, and tremble while they behold the *landlord degraded from his natural rank*, the credit of the neighbourhood fatally wounded, the farmer totally ruined, and the honest industrious labourer unemployed, in danger of becoming an easy sacrifice to the demoralization, ruin, and disgrace which idleness never fails to produce, the effects whereof they lament to see so fearfully operating in that and the adjoining county, in acts of desperation and works of depredation; that in contemplating the distresses they are at present suffering, in common with all the Agricultural Interest throughout the kingdom, the Petitioners beg to represent to the House that they are naturally led to *inquire the causes of them*, and in this pursuit they are proud to acknowledge that they live in a country where, for the last fifty years at least, Agriculture has been studied with assiduity, and practised with an ardour equal to its importance, and are so fortunate as to reside in a county which deservedly ranks as high or higher than any other in the kingdom, for its agricultural skill and improvement, and in those Hundreds, in particular, they can boast a *superior soil*, where *no deficiency of labour is felt*, where *markets are convenient* and numerous, and industry unremitting; and with all these advantages in their favour they are led to ask each other, why can they not raise their produce at as little expense, and afford to sell it at as low a profit, as the *Continental Farmer;* and the Petitioners must confess it appears to them the obvious answer is, that the Foreigner is not subject to the same heavy expenses as the *English* Farmer, he is therefore able to raise and dispose of his commodity at a less price; and in this view of the subject they cannot help feeling that the heavy burdens they are liable to, *by direct and indirect taxation*, to defray the interest of *an enormous national debt* (contracted in *fighting the battles of our Continental neighbours*,) and for the *necessary expenses* of our Government, together with the partial imposts of tithes, poors'-rates, county-rates, surveyors'-rates, and other parochial levies, are the great, prominent, and principal, if not the only causes of all our grievances, and it is therefore to the reduction or abolition of these the Petitioners anxiously look for permanent relief; that to the causes of distress just enumerated the Petitioners cannot help submitting to the House another, which they

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consider to have contributed in no small degree to increase them, they mean the immense *importation of Foreign grain*, which has been suffered of late years to inundate this country, originating, perhaps, in unwise legislative interference by the late Corn Laws, which, by obliging the Foreigner to store his produce till the ports were open, when that took place enabled him to glut the market with his cheap-raised corn, and depress, in a very short space of time, the price of home production much lower than they have reason to believe would otherwise have been the case, and yet they lament to see that *abundance* (contradictory as it may seem) *produces want and low prices*, ruin not only to the grower but to the consumer also, for it is notorious that a great part of our *Peasantry* are *literally starving* in the midst of plenty, which *they fear* argues some *defect* or *inattention* in the *Government of the Country*; that the Petitioners submit to the House not only that the reduction of one shilling *per* bushel of the duty on Malt is not sufficient for their relief, but also whether the whole duty ought not to be taken off, and that reduction followed up by a speedy repeal of the taxes on Salt, Soap, Leather, and Candles, and those duties compensated for by the savings derived from a *more rigid economy* in the public expenditure, to be produced by a *reduction in the Army* and *Navy*, a *total abolition of all useless sinecures, offices, places*, and *pensions*, and so assimilating, as near as possible, our expenditure to *what it was on the Peace Establishment prior to the late French war*; and the Petitioners further submit, in furtherance of such reduction and economy, the propriety of the House directing all its great energies in discovering some equitable and *efficient scheme* (to be carried into effect the *first favourable opportunity*) for the purpose of reducing by some *grand effort* the present *enormous Debt* of the country, which hangs *like a millstone* round the neck of the genius of *Britain*, threatening to overwhelm her agriculture, trade, and commerce, in the gulf of insolvency, and the whole country in bankruptcy, *revolution*, and despair; that the Petitioners acknowledge with pleasure the King's late *gracious boon* to the country, and receive the donation with *the gratitude* of *loyal* subjects; but they should be more gratified to see so good an example followed (in relative proportion to their incomes) by *all the Royal Family*, and the great Officers of State; that the Petitioners deeply regret while they represent to the House, that they behold the disorganization, not to say *disloyalty* and *anarchy*, which the present state of things is rapidly producing in this country; and they cannot but feel a moral certainty, that unless speedy relief is at hand, by an immediate removal of their present grievances, the *golden chain*, which hitherto so *beautifully linked* and united the different orders of society in this country for the good of all (sinking in nice gradations, link under link, from the King upon the throne to the lowest subject, and rendering each the *strength, support*, and *glory* of the other) in danger of being fatally broken, or so *twisted* and *knotted* as to render it, if not quite useless, at least to destroy its harmony, grace, and *beauty*; that the Petitioners are not of the number of those who are first and foremost to *obstruct the wheels of Government*, or impede their course by *mistimed* and *factious opposition* to the measures of Administration; they therefore trust that the House will feel, that when the necessity of their situation obliges them thus to come forward in this *their hour of extreme distress*, they are entitled to be heard with candour, and their Petitions treated with respect; the Petitioners, therefore,

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now humbly implore the House, forthwith to take into their consideration the distressed state of the Agricultural Interest of the country; they petition for the *salvation of the yeomanry* of the country; they petition for the protection of their remaining properties, their families, their fellow-subjects throughout the kingdom; they petition for the *peace and safety of the land*, to revive its Agriculture, by reducing the taxation under which they labour; to support, encourage, and insist upon every principle of economical retrenchment and reduction consistent with the security of the empire, and, before it is *too late*, protect them from the evils, the *anarchy*, the heart-rending horrors of *national bankruptcy, revolution* and ruin; and though no adequate measures for their relief have yet been adopted, they still *wish to feel a confidence in the House* to devise the ways and apply the means to save them from *total annihilation*, and restore the country to *peace, submission, contentment*, and *repose*."

These Gentlemen, too, dread "*anarchy and confusion*;" not, as I said before, from the workings of us Jacobins and Radicals; but from the workings of that precious system that they have so long supported. And what do they pray for? Rigid economy, reduction of salaries, a total abolition of all useless sinecures, offices, places and pensions, and the reduction of the enormous Debt; and this they pray for, for the salvation of the Yeomanry of the Country, for the peace and safety of the land, and for the sake of being protected from the evils and horrors of bankruptcy, anarchy and *revolution!* For these very things did we pray in 1817, and the Committees of both Houses declared in their Reports, that we meant *anarchy, revolution*, and a general spoliation of property. How are the tables turned then! And what shame and remorse must these men feel, if long continued injustice have not rendered them dead to every fair and honourable sentiment?

I agree with these gentlemen, that the "*golden chain*" will be broken to pieces; but I by no means participate in their regret at the prospect. A golden chain that demands sixty millions of pounds sterling in a year to keep it in repair, may be very "*beautiful*" in the eyes of these gentlemen; but it is a great deal too costly for my taste. We have here again all the fearful apprehensions of the Select Vestry of Burwash; apprehensions, however, which are with me bright expectations, instead of gloomy forebodings; for a change must come; and it must be for the better.

It is with unfeigned satisfaction that I inform you, in conclusion of this long letter, that Sir Thomas

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Lethbridge who has been a Member of Parliament ever since the year 1806, and who has invariably supported the Pitt system until now, has at last spoken out, in language which Castlereagh says has an *inflammatory* tendency, just as he said, and *just as Sir Thomas said, too*, in the year 1817, when we petitioned for the very things which Sir Thomas now wants done, not excepting even *Parliamentary Reform*, to which this Member for the County of Somerset now acknowledges that he is become a convert.

These are surprising changes. These changes are wholly incompatible with the continuation of the existence of the Pitt system. But, there was something even more important than the above acknowledgment of conversion, that came from Sir Thomas Lethbridge in the debate of the 4th of June. He said, "If Landlords were not to have the "means of paying the taxes, "*they had but one alternative*, "and that was to consider *how* "*far they were bound* to sustain "burdens which were most unequally, and, therefore, most "unjustly imposed upon them. "He was aware that this was a "tiresome subject, but it was "better that the House should "be tired *in this way*, than that "any thing *more disagreeable* "*should ensue*." We can easily guess at Sir Thomas's meaning here; for the natural result of a consideration which shall terminate in an opinion that men are *not bound to sustain burdens*, is too plain to need pointing out; is so very plain that every one must see it, and it would, it must be confessed, though adopted but by one single hundred of one single county, be completely efficient.

The ruin that is spreading itself over the country is strongly illustrated in the case of a Mr. Breedon of Nottinghamshire, who, in the year 1813, purchased some land of the Duke of Devonshire at a hundred and three pounds an acre, which has now been sold at fifty-eight pounds an acre. He was eminent for his breed of sheep; and his ewes, that used to sell for five pounds a-head, have now been sold off under execution, at thirty-four or thirty-five shillings a-head. Here is a man, with a large family, totally ruined by the measures of the Government; and this, as I said in my petition to the parliament, is only one instance among thousands upon thousands.

It is this class of *Yeomanry* that

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suffer the most severely of any at present. What shame must they feel when they look back! What shame for their folly, what remorse for their injustice towards others! I read in the Melancholy Mercury of Bedfordshire, the following paragraph, well worthy of general attention, and particularly the attention of the yeomanry. "Among the expenses "incurred by the Yeomanry Ca- "valry for the last year, an Ac- "count of which was moved for "by Mr. Hume, those of Bed- "fordshire deserve notice. It "appears in the return, that there "is for exercise, under the Act, "the sum of 57*l.* 13*s.* But that "there is, besides this, placed to "the account of Lieutenant Co- "lonel *Macqueen*, under the "head of ordinary services, the "sum of 457*l.* To Captain "Farrer, 180*l.*; and for perma- "nent duty, or *suppression of* "*riots*, above 600*l.*; the whole "amounting to 1,296*l.*!" Now imagine, if you can, riots in Bedfordshire! and all put down by the loyal *Colonel Macqueen* for the trifling charge of 1,296*l.*! I fixed my eye upon this man, (who is now a Member of Parliament,) in the Summer of 1819, though I was then in America. I remarked on the presenting of a sword to him by his Yeomanry. He got a twist down, but, unfortunately, not quite so effectual a one as that which I have given to poor Lawyer Scarlett. This Potter Macqueen is the hopeful son of an old Scotch Physician, who married the Heiress of Ridgemount in Bedfordshire. The son's politics are precisely those of Sir William Curtis, Cartwright of Northamptonshire, and the whole of that class that hold up the envy of surrounding nations and the admiration of the world. This Cartwright was the Chairman the other day at the Pitt Club, when the Lord Chancellor remarked, at the conclusion of his speech; "That the *religion* "of the country was *safe*; but he "begged to caution those who "*loved the Constitution*, not to "suffer themselves to be misled "by individuals, who, professing "anxiety to improve the Con- "stitution, had no object in view "but its destruction." Air, "*Steady boys, steady!*" We know what they mean by being steady; that is, to pursue steadily the object of getting as much out of us as they can; and to stick to THE THING, as long as it can, by any means, be made to hang together.

However, hang together it will

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not. Peel's Bill has decreed that. The conversion of Sir THOMAS LETHBRIDGE is merely a specimen of what we have to expect, and of what really exists, too, though few have yet openly made the declaration. I have before explained to you the motives which actuate the Boroughmen; I have descanted on their power; but that power would be nothing if the Landlords who are not Boroughmen would come forward in the cause of Reform *with the Yeomanry at their back*. I do not mean with swords and pistols and carabines, but *without* any of these. Let Sir THOMAS LETHBRIDGE get the signatures of the *whole* of the farmers of his county to a remonstrance made in his own manly language uttered in the House. Let us see this in only that one county, and Sir THOMAS will no more have to complain of the *indifference* of Castlereagh and company.

Nor are we to reject Sir THOMAS LETHBRIDGE, and, in the language of the Morning Chronicle, reproach him with his support of the Pitt system. The Whigs themselves supported that system when they came into power. They coalesced with the Grenvilles and Wellesleys; they voted the payment of the debts of Pitt; they added to the number of German troops in the country; they added enormously to the pension list; and they endeavoured to introduce the exciseman into private houses; yes, to ram his stick into the beer which farmers brewed for their harvest men; and as for Reform, who have been more bitter enemies of Reform than the whole of that faction; and we now see, cheek by jowl, at the "purity of election" dinner at Westminster, the son of the Duke of Buckingham, who is member for the Borough of Aylesbury, and the son of the placeman Hobhouse, who is member for the Borough of Westminster; here we see them cheek by jowl, toasting Parliamentary Reform, while the placeman Hobhouse is toasting Canning in another part of the City of Westminster, and while the Duke of Buckingham is sending forth his *Bill of Fare* for the benefit of Farmers' wives.

Let us hear, then, none of these accusations against Sir Thomas

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Lethbridge; who, at any rate, is not actually in the act, like so many others, of holding with the hare and running with the hounds. He has not been professing certain principles, and doing at the same time every thing in his power utterly to destroy every one able and willing to give effect to those principles, while he himself was *doing nothing*. Sir Thomas Lethbridge has acted the part of a person greatly in error; but, if we are to judge from what he now says in Parliament, he is a man of sincerity and integrity.

I have addressed to you a very long letter. It contains several things of interest to the country; and that it may tend to produce effects beneficial to that country, I am sure there is no man more anxious than yourself. I am

Your Friend and

Most obedient Servant,

WM. COBBETT.

DINNER,

To celebrate the Anniversary of Peel's Bill.

ANNIVERSARIES are held on several accounts; but on no account was one ever held more worthily than in honour of this famous Bill, which has produced already such wonderful effects, and which has for us such prodigious benefits in store. For my own part, I look upon the passing of this Bill as the greatest event that England ever yet saw; and I have been, not reluctantly, I confess, but with great cheerfulness and pleasure, induced, however incompetent to the task, to take the Chair upon this occasion. . . . It is meant simply to celebrate the passing of this Bill. What speeches will be made, or what other exhibitions will take place, may depend, perhaps, upon casual circumstances. The Dinner is to be held at the Horns Tavern,

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Kennington, on the second of July. Further particulars, as to the mode of obtaining the tickets, and the like, will be stated in the next Register. The room will actually dine six hundred persons; and there are other rooms besides. It is meant, in order to do as much honour to the thing as possible, and to cause, at the same time, an agreeable association of ideas, to confine the number of tickets to six hundred and fifty-eight, that being precisely the number of seats in that matchless assembly which first gave its unanimous sanction to this immortal Bill. I shall say no more upon the subject at present, and have said this, merely in the way of notice to our friends at a distance from London.

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TO THE

ELECTORS

OF WESTMINSTER.

On Sinecure Seats in Parliament.

Kensington, 10th June 1822.

GENTLEMEN,

FOR a great many years you have been making just complaints respecting the existence of *Sinecure Places*. Sinecure places are very bad things. They are a great injury, and a great disgrace to the country; but they are not more injurious and more disgraceful than sinecure seats in Parliament, and they are infinitely less injurious when from those seats great efforts in the cause of the people are naturally expected. The expression of these opinions, and in an address to you, has been suggested by a speech of your Member, Sir Francis Burdett, and an answer of Mr. Peel to that speech, in the House of Commons, on the fourth of this present month of June.

It is impossible to speak in the language of sense and sincerity of that part of the conduct of your Member which I am now about to bring under your view, without, in some degree, appearing to implicate the Electors of Westminster themselves. But, while I am far from wishing to excuse any thing in your conduct which I think savouring of folly, and still farther from any wish to utter any thing towards you in the way of flattery, I cannot but recollect, and it is my duty to say it, that I have never, in my whole life, witnessed more good sense, more public spirit, more disinterestedness, than amongst the Electors of Westminster; and that, though I can find no full justification for any part of you, I can find ample apology for your seeming to continue to give your support to this Sinecure Member, and to the person nominated by him; though you have, in fact, made your city

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a rotten borough. I can find ample apology for your conduct, when I reflect on the regularly organised system of intrigue and deception; that system of blinding and of misleading, which has so long been carried on by that Rump Committee, to which, in point of craftiness and of industry, there is not a band of peculators of any description that must not yield the palm.

When we look back on all the efforts that we made for rescuing Westminster from the hands of the Oligarchy; when I look back to the twenty-seven letters that I addressed to you; and when I reflect, more especially, on your truly noble sacrifices and exertions, and then see what they have produced, I am ready to say to myself, "Why make our lives "uneasy about Reform, if this be "all that Reform can produce us? "If Reform can give us nothing "but Members that will do *no-* "*thing* except cram the sons of "placemen into seats along with "them, why make our lives un- "easy; why trouble ourselves, "our wives and families; why "expose ourselves to the ill-will "of the numerous hordes of tax- "eaters by our struggles to obtain "this Reform?"

Observations of this sort I have more than once addressed to you before. To shew that they have not been made at random; that they have not been made without good ground, would be unnecessary, for I have never made the charge without the accompanying proof. Proof of the same sort now lies before me in the speeches before spoken of, which I shall now insert here, before I offer any comment upon them; and, if you can read them without some degree of shame, you must be strangely changed since the time that I had the pleasure personally to know you. By way of explanation I should observe, that the subject before the House was a Petition from the Hundred of Grimshaw, in the county of Norfolk, presented by Mr. Coke. On this petition being presented, Sir Thomas Lethbridge had made some very pertinent and striking remarks on the situation of the Landlords, and on the conduct of the Ministers. Lord Castlereagh had resented this language and had charged Sir Thomas with doing that which was calculated to have an inflammatory effect. Mr. Benett of Wiltshire, Mr. G. Bennet, and others, had spoken in defence of Sir Thomas Lethbridge. Then rose Sir Francis Burdett, and the following is the Report,

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which I take from the Morning Chronicle, of what was said by him and what was said by Mr. Peel, upon this occasion.

Sir F. BURDETT commenced the Honourable Baronet (Sir T. Lethbridge) for the manly way in which he had come forward to state his opinion—an opinion which was that of the country generally. He hoped, that when these matters were under discussion the gentlemen of England would not conceal their opinions, but express in that House what they felt and expressed elsewhere. He was sure that the expression of such opinions would produce a reaction. He would not say that any thing which could be done by Ministers, and by the House, constituted as it was, would operate the salvation of the country. He was convinced that the distresses of the country proceeded from the *ignorance and incapacity of Ministers.* He felt no gratitude to Ministers for any reduction of taxes which they had effected. That reduction the public had a right to demand many years ago. The country was, on account of the difference in the currency, more heavily burdened now than formerly. He believed that if the House were not reformed, Ministers could not consent to such a reduction of taxes as would produce any real relief to the country. If the Ministers had abated some of the taxes, they were entitled to no gratitude, because they had no right to spend one shilling of the public money beyond what was absolutely necessary for the demands of the State. In remitting what they could remit, they did no more than their duty. He could not approve of the proposed measures for the relief of the agriculturists. He was *convinced that all protecting duties were useless* [hear!]. The *corn trade ought to be perfectly free.* There was one measure which should have induced Ministers to alter their line of conduct. When the currency was altered, and the weight of the taxes increased, they should have *diminished all the salaries which had been granted or augmented during the time that the currency was depreciated.* Ministers had talked about restoring the currency of the country to a *healthful state*; but they ought to recollect, that what was healthful in one state of the country might not be healthful in another. The Noble Lord (Londonderry) had talked as though they had nothing to do, in order to relieve the country, but to revert at once to a metallic currency; but the event had shown, that this, with the burdens of the country remaining the same, *had been productive of the most ruinous consequences.*—The Noble Lord must not think, that though he had by a vote or two been able to put off another Session, he had relieved the distresses, or quieted the complaints of the country; and when he came again to meet Parliament, he would find, that the country was by no means satisfied. The Noble Lord had complained of inflammatory language, and it was very natural for a Minister who had not done his duty to the country, so to complain; but if he reduced the landed proprietors to a state in which they could receive no rents, and yet called upon them to pay taxes, he must not hope that they could abstain from telling him the truth. If he would not alter his policy, he might depend upon hearing a great deal more of such language—[Hear, hear!].

Mr. PEEL said, this was not the first time that the Honourable Baronet (Sir F. Burdett) had attacked the measure of the Resumption of Cash Payments. But the Honourable Baronet would do well to consider that this was *really a censure on his own conduct.* He was guilty of a *gross breach of duty to his*

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constituents, and to his country, for not having given warning at the time the measure was proposed [hear!]. If the measure was iniquitous now, it must have been iniquitous in 1819; for though politics might vary, iniquitous measures were always so. It was, therefore, not fair in the Honourable Baronet to desert his duty at the time, and come forward after the lapse of three years with a *holiday speech*. There was never a Ministerial measure carried through the House with more unanimity; and there was little doubt that, had Ministers abandoned it, they would have drawn *down upon themselves the severest censures of the Opposition*. He was sorry if a measure which was so necessary at the time, considering the precipice upon which the country then stood, had in any way aggravated the sufferings of any one; but the measure in its general tendency had had the most beneficial effects. It was therefore not fair to *come forward now* with a view of rendering the country dissatisfied with it. The country—the Gentlemen opposite owed him or the other Members of the Administration no gratitude. They sought not for it. They would be quite satisfied with having justice done them. He trusted he had said enough upon this part of the Honourable Baronet's speech, and he would not enter at present upon the question of Reform, or any of the other topics to which the Honourable Baronet had alluded [hear!]

Sir F. BURDETT, in explanation, said, that his not being *ready on every occasion* to point out the *mischievous consequences* of the measures of Ministers, was no reason why the country should be exposed to hardships which it could not bear. *All* the evil which had resulted from the measure in question had however been done *three years previous* to the time at which the measure had been formally carried through; and he had in *so far*, at least, adverted to the consequences.

Can you, Electors of Westminster, read this speech of Mr. Peel, without feeling some degree of shame? Can you read it without reflecting, that to you, as well as to Sir Francis Burdett, applies this cutting and just retort of Mr. Peel? When you elected Sir Francis Burdett, was it not that he should attend in his place in Parliament, and that he should make use of his talents and his knowledge to prevent the adoption of measures ruinous to the country? For what did you elect him, if he were to suffer such measures to pass in silence; and then, after the ruin had been consummated, to come with what Mr. Peel truly calls a holiday speech, and taunt the Ministers in the language of one of those hungry intriguers who wish themselves to wallow in the riches of office? Did you elect him for this? If you did, talk no more about Reform of Parliament; for what rotten borough in the Kingdom has ever acted more inconsistent with sense and integrity?

How stands the case, even on his own showing? It stands thus: In 1819, a Bill was passed, which he, in a late debate, described as the most unjust and most cruel of

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measures. He said it had committed robbery and confiscation. He now says, that, when the "currency was altered, and the "weight of the taxes increased, "they should have diminished all "the salaries which had been "granted or augmented during "the time that the currency was "depreciated." Mr. Peel's answer to this, as far as relates to your Member, was complete. For he told him, that he "would do "well to consider that this was "really a censure on his own "conduct, and that he was guilty "of *a gross breach of duty to-* "*wards his constituents*, and to- "wards his country, for *not hav-* "*ing given the warning at the* "*time that the measure was pro-* "*posed.*"

What could be more just than this? What censure was ever more merited or ever bestowed in fitter time and place? The reply to this, on the part of Sir Francis, was as feeble and as unsatisfactory as his neglect had been flagrant. It was this, "that his not being "*ready, on every occasion*, to point "out the mischievous consequence "of measures *was no reason why* "*the country should suffer.*"— Certainly not: no reason why the country should suffer; but a very good reason for you to bestow censure on him for not having pointed out the mischievous consequences at the time; and a perfectly good reason for his abstaining from reproaches on the Ministers on this account, unless these reproaches on them had been accompanied with his taking a great share of blame to himself for that gross breach of duty in not giving the warning before the ruin began. He says that all the evil which had resulted from the measure in question was due to something that had been done three years before; and that in so far, at least, he had *adverted to the consequences.* Indeed! This is the first I ever heard of that; and I have been a pretty attentive observer of what has passed in the House of Commons for the last twenty years. This is a question of fact, and let the Rump Committee point out, if they can, any one single word that he ever uttered tending to give the country a warning of its dangers from this destructive cause.

To talk of *adverting*, casually adverting to a matter like this, really makes an addition to his offence. Did he understand this matter, when the ruin of so many thousands of meritorious men; when all that robbery and confiscation of which he now speaks,

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was about to be decreed; was about to receive its consummation! Did he understand this matter then; did he foresee the fatal consequences? Did he see thousands upon thousands of farmers and tradesmen absolutely doomed to the poor-house; did he foresee the innumerable instances of broken hearts, insanity and suicide, that this measure would produce; did he foresee that two-thirds of the farmers and tradesmen would be reduced to insolvency, while an insolent crew of Jews and jobbers were fattening on the spoils? If he did, is there pardon for him on this side the grave; and is he to ride off, and are the Rump Committee still to hold him up as "Westminster's Pride and England's Glory;" and that, too, upon the mere strength of his observation, that he is not ready, upon every occasion, to point out mischievous consequences? When was he ready? When was he ready when he was wanted? But, if not ready upon an occasion like this, what an abuse of words to call himself a Representative of the People; and what impudence in that Rump Committee, to hold an Anniversary, to celebrate what they call the *triumph of Westminster* in putting him into this Parliament!

Did he not understand the subject; did he not foresee the dangers; did he not anticipate that which has taken place; was he as ignorant of the whole matter as the Ministers themselves? If he were, where does he look for a justification of his censures upon them for not having foreseen and provided against that which he himself did not foresee? Or, at the least, where is his justification for making this charge against them, without, at the same time, confessing that he himself could not foresee the danger, or that he had been guilty of that gross breach of duty to you and to his country with which he has now been charged?

At the very least, therefore, he is justly chargeable with foul play; justly chargeable with carping and cavilling at that, the existence of which he himself, is, in part, answerable for. He now talks of the concomitant measures which ought to have accompanied that of a return to the gold currency, and Mr. DENMAN, that favourite of the famed city of absolute wisdom; that Solon of the wise men of the East; he, too, must back up the Baronet, and say, "that the measure for restoring "the currency was an excellent "measure, in itself; but it ought

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"to have been accompanied by "collateral measures." You have, I think, Gentlemen, *read this before*, as the man in the farce tells the plagiarist who had stolen from Shakespeare, "perdition "catch my soul, but I do love "thee." I will tell you where you have read it, Gentlemen; in about two hundred of "*Cobbett's Registers*," and particularly in those three, written in Long Island, and now republished under the name of "Long Island Prophecies." This favourite of the wise men of Gotham; this dearly beloved son of the city of absolute wisdom had, doubtless, not read those Long Island Prophecies, though he had been selected by those public spirited gentry, the *Reforming* Freemen of Nottingham; this select being, who cut such a figure as defender of the unfortunate Queen, not having read the Long Island Prophecies, was, when Peel's Bill was passed, left under the guidance of his own absolute mind; being in that state, not the smallest danger did he smell out, any more than did Westminster's Pride, at the time of passing Peel's Bill. Not a syllable did he utter in opposition to the Bill; not in one single instance, did he open his lips upon the subject; and yet, *now*; "now," as Mr. Peel so emphatically and so justly observes, his absolutely wise head suggests to him, though he has not read the Long Island Prophecies, mind, that the Bill ought to have had concomitant measures. These two great cities, taking Nottingham and Coventry along with them, set, it must be confessed, an excellent example to the country, and show, in the most striking, practical manner the benefits likely to be derived to the nation at large from that species of Reform which is to be put in execution by Corporation Juntos and Rump Committees.

There was another great personage, too, nay, two of them, who figured in the Parliament of 1819: Mr. Waithman, and Sir Robert Wilson. These do, not, however, reproach the Ministers with the evils resulting from the measure before us; but this much of them we can say; that both being in Parliament, neither uttered a word in opposition to that measure; but sat there, and partook in the unanimous vote, as if it had been a measure, so necessary in itself, and so certain to produce happiness and honour to the country, that no human being could possibly entertain a doubt upon the subject.

But Sir Francis Burdett ap-

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pears to be doubly and trebly criminal; for he pretends to have had some foresight as to the effect of the measure. He says he adverted to the consequences three years before. Then he *had* a notion of the consequences; and yet he was silent when the final blow was given. He did not then say that salaries and other outgoings ought to be reduced; no, but he in silence suffered a Bill to pass, that was to *double his rents*, reduce his expenses to a half; enrich himself and ruin his devoted tenants along with the general mass of Farmers and Tradesmen of the Kingdom. The only apology for the Landlords, upon that occasion, is, that they did not see the tendency of the measure: but he deprives himself of that apology, by his pretending to having forseen it. My opinion is that he did not; but, if he did, where are we to find words to express our feelings at his conduct since he must have known that the measure tended to fill his bags, and to produce the ruin, the heart-breaking, the utter beggary and despair of his tenants!

He is now telling us, that *salaries* ought to have been reduced, when the value of the money was augmented. He has recently told us that the interest of the debt ought to be reduced in consequence of the augmentation of the value of money. But, amongst all the "*collateral measures*" that he and the favourite of the city of absolute wisdom have now discovered to have been just and necessary; not a word do we hear said about the alteration of leases, and the reduction of the amount of rents, mortgages and bonds! Yet, you will clearly, perceive, Gentlemen, that, if it were just to reduce salaries, pensions, and interest of debt, it must have been most iniquitous not to reduce *rents* at the same time; it must have been an act, for which, the landlords giving their assent to it, would have merited to have been dealt with upon the spot, and in a manner that I need not attempt to describe. Not a word, however, does he say about leases, even now; not a word about reducing rents by law; a great deal about *compassion for the farmers*, but not a single syllable about releasing them from those engagements which he knows must reduce them to beggary.

Mr. Peel, when he was reminding him of his gross breach of duty, might have told him, that he was more criminal than the Ministers; for that he had read (as might have been made appear,

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from many circumstances) those Long Island Prophecies, which they might or might not have read; and you have to tell him, that, if he did not read them, it was his own fault. He ought to have read them; yes, and so he did, as well as you; but he wanted either the capacity to understand, or the disposition to act upon, their dictates.

However, this is by no means all, and especially since the wretched tools of the Baronet have boasted of his *consistency*, contrasted with my inconsistency. Early in this Session of Parliament, he said, in speaking of the cause of the distress, that the alteration in the value of money could not have been the cause. His words were "that he could "not see how Peel's Bill could "have lowered prices of produce "a hundred per cent., when it "had raised the value of money "only four and a half per cent. No matter from what motive this arose. Perhaps, its source was ignorance; perhaps pure love of contradiction to me, most amiable, to be sure, and perfectly in character of the Rump. But, no matter what the motive, here we now have this consistent gentleman, saying, at the *beginning of the Session*, that he could not see how this measure could have been the cause of the distress; and, before the Session is over, we find him stigmatizing that same measure as *productive of the most ruinous consequences;* and, upon one occasion of late we find him holding it forth as a thing for which the Ministers ought to be *impeached.*

With regard to his *consistency*, however, it is necessary to say a little more. At a Westminster Meeting, about a year and a half ago, perceiving that I was labouring hard to awaken the country, and particularly the Farmers and Tradesmen, to a sense of their danger from this source of mischief, he took occasion to allude to those labours of mine, and said, that it was "*putting the cart before the horse;*" this was again very amiable and public-spirited, and very wise into the bargain. He was for *bawling* about Reform; and, although it had been dinned into his ears a thousand times over, that the way to get a Reform was to convince men that it was necessary in order to prevent their pecuniary ruin; still he was for bawling away, without point or compass, and was ready to stigmatize the real and substantial endeavours to procure it, as something equally preposterous with

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putting the cart before the horse. He now finds Sir Thomas Lethbridge saying frankly and honestly that he has been made a convert to Reform; that he has found it absolutely necessary, to preserve himself and his country from ruin. The *consistent* gentleman praises Sir Thomas Lethbridge for his "*manly*" manner of proceeding; but he has not himself the manliness to follow the example by retracting his, at once dull and spiteful imputations about putting the cart before the horse.

Were we to make even a bare list of the *consistencies* of this noisy patriot, and to notice none less flagrant than that of apologizing for not being present at a Fox Dinner, after having, for about five-and-twenty years, inveighed against the principles and motives of Fox and his party, we should fill a volume. One more, however, I will particularly notice, because we have it before us here, in this very speech. He here tells us, that he could not "approve "of the proposed measures for "the relief of the Agriculturalists. "He was convinced that all *pro-* "*tecting duties were useless. The* "*trade in corn ought to be per-* "*fectly free.*" Now, Gentlemen, what a figure do you cut; and in what respect do you pretend to hold yourselves above the inhabitants of the vilest rotten borough, while this person is your Member? Did you not, in the year 1815, meet to Petition against the Corn Bill? Did he not object to that Petition? Did he not *decline to support it in the House?* When called upon by Castlereagh to declare himself for or against the Bill, did he not wriggle out of the question by saying that he was neither for it nor against it; and did he not, when it came to the vote, give the Bill all the support, which he had the effrontery to give it, by neglecting to oppose it, according to your positive instructions, which were in unison, too, with the whole of the trading and manufacturing part of the nation?

Now he has discovered a conviction, that all protecting duties are useless; and a great deal more than this, for his consistency has taught him that the *trade in Corn ought to be perfectly free.* Mind, too, how his opinions chop and change with the times and with his interests. He now thinks the trade in corn ought to be perfectly free; that no Corn Bills ought to exist; and, of course, that the present Corn Bill is, to say the least of it, injurious to the people. Placed before the Jury,

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at Leicester, only about two years ago, and after the Corn Bill had existed five years, what does he say? Why, he takes merit to himself for never having flattered the prejudices and follies of the people; he takes merit to himself for having abstained from addressing letters to weaver boys; he takes merit to himself for having openly dissented from the opinions of the people, and for having acted contrary to their wishes; and he cites, as a happy illustration of his assertion, his conduct in 1815, when he was for a Corn Bill, though the people all over the Kingdom, and his *own constituents, in particular, were against it!* "*Now*," as Mr. Peel says, now he has discovered that Corn Bills are bad things, and that the trade in Corn ought to be perfectly free. Still he is consistent; if we take two circumstances into view, namely; First, That he has found, by experience, that a Corn Bill has not answered the purpose of keeping up his rents and putting money in his pocket; and Second, That he is not now standing before a Jury of *Landlords and Farmers*, on whose verdict depended something so very interesting to himself!

Gentlemen of the City of Westminster, you, whom I once knew to be so abundant in good sense and public spirit, is any thing more wanted to bring you to a sense of your present degradation? If it be, you have only to reflect that, not only does this Member still sit by your authority; but that you have submitted to fill the other seat, merely to gratify him and to keep from that seat those that might and would have served you with effect. You may complain till your voices are hoarse, and until there be neither paper nor ink left to record your complaint; you may complain of Rotten Boroughs, of Burgage Tenures, of Nominees of Lords; and Daddy Sturch may prattle away once a year to the gulls that fill a part of the three-part-empty tables of the Crown and Anchor, in honour of "Purity of Election;" all this bellowing and bawling about the Nominees of Peers may fill your mouths and blur over the papers of the Rump; but, is not the Nominee of a Lord as good as the Nominee of a man like this? Where is the Lord that has been guilty of a grosser breach of duty to his country; and where is the Lord who has exhibited conduct so flagrantly inconsistent; but, above all, where is the Lord, who, to gratify his own low dirty spleen,

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and envy, has produced a millionth part of the mischief that this man has produced?

Gentlemen, I put this last question with a desire to obtain an answer to it. Three things must be nearly as well known to you as the name of each of you is known to himself. First, That the evils, which Sir Francis Burdett now declares to exist, as arising from certain measures of the Government, have been clearly seen by me, and distinctly foretold by me, as the natural consequence of such measures, for many years past: Second, That, if I had been in the House of Commons, in the year 1819, these measures would not have been adopted, without the country having a clear insight as to the danger, and without the consequent saving from ruin of great numbers, at least of those who have been ruined by those measures: Third, That this very man, who now confesses the ruinous effects of the measures and affects to lament them, has laboured most indefatigably, and by all sorts of means, and through all sorts of channels, to prevent that which would have prevented this ruin.

These three things are as well known to each of you as any thing can be known. The country is now awake to a sense of its danger. I have numerous persons coming to me and writing to me to thank me personally for having preserved them from ruin. This partial, and comparatively trifling effect I have been enabled to produce out of Parliament. What, then, would have been the effect, if I had been speaking to the whole nation three years ago, that which has saved these families from ruin? There he is, your Member for the better part of twenty years past; chosen and re-chosen by you; chanted to the skies by the Rump as Westminster's Pride and England's Glory; but, has one single man in all England ever found his way to him to say, "You have saved me and my family from ruin?" No, but hundreds of thousands may, with justice, pour out their curses upon him as having been the principal cause of preventing them from hearing that timely warning which would have preserved them and their families from that dreadful state; that state of misery, of mental suffering, of anguish of all sorts, into which they have been plunged by measures which he himself now reproaches the Ministers with, and which measures could never have produced these effects had it not been for the base

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envy and foul malignity that he entertained towards me.

He pretends to commiserate the sufferings of the ruined parties! Did he endeavour to prevent those sufferings himself; or was it his nominee, the placeman Hobhouse's son, that was to be his deputy in discharging the great and sacred duty? Neither. The last-mentioned important personage has been an able seconder in all his negligences and all his nothingnesses. Very able; very efficient in preventing others from doing good, but never forward except in showing that they can do no good themselves, and in evincing an indefatigable determination that it should be done, if they could help it, by nobody else. Worse than dog in manger, for the cur wanted the hay to lie upon, whereas the Pride of Westminster wants not even the seat if he can prevent others from doing the good which would naturally arise out of their having it in their possession.

One thing, and only one, can possibly make an addition to the shame of Westminster; and that is, that the Baronet should vacate, or cause his nominee to do it, for the purpose of making way for the captain; aye for one of those captains, of the introduction of whom Mr. Hume has so justly complained as having been, at the expense of full pay to the country, put into the places of those that might have been brought from half-pay. Why, Gentlemen, the bare thought is enough to sting you to the soul, and make you ashamed to look the rest of England in the face. To this state, however, have you been brought by the intrigues of a cunning, plodding, hugger-mugger Rump Committee; and in this state you must remain, as long as you give countenance to that despicable piece of imposture now seen through and despised by all the nation but yourselves.

Without being able to divest myself of the recollections of 1806, when you made that noble struggle which finally overthrew the Oligarchy; without being able to extinguish within me the feelings of respect and attachment then awakened by your excellent conduct, and with the hope that I shall again witness what will again make Westminster an example to follow, and not a warning to shun, I remain

Your sincere Friend and

Most obedient Servant,

WM. COBBETT.

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KENT COUNTY MEETING.

Maidstone,
Tuesday Morning, June 11, 1822.

WE left London yesterday at about four in the afternoon, with the weather as hot as I ever knew it in England in June. About half the hay is got in till we come to Farningham, but on this side of that place, not half certainly. The crops of grass are very good, particularly those of Saint Foin and Lucerne.—They do not cut the former at an age sufficiently early. Mr. TULL gives convincing reasons for cutting it always *before the bloom comes out*, or any part of it. If left till the field looks *red*, the hay cannot be half so good. It is but a poorish country, till you get to *Wrotham*, within eleven miles of Maidstone; that is to say, poor compared with what it is here, where the cultivation consists partly of *hops*, and where the land very much resembles that between Honiton and Exeter, and that in the neighbourhood of Ross, Hereford, and Coventry, except that here, the bottom is *chalk*, and there it is red stone. In the very poor soils the barley and oats may, perhaps, have suffered from the drought of late; but they are quite big enough here. Both are very forward. Both, in some places, coming into ear. The wheat is all in ear; and some of it in bloom. The crop must be in proportion to the nature of the land, in a great degree; but, generally, the wheat looks exceedingly well; and it is so *very early* as to seem to set blights at defiance. It seems impossible that we should not have some new wheat in the market by the 20th of July; so that, if the Collective do not look sharp, they will not have the *pawning* project ready for receiving the first fruits of the harvest, at any rate. The peas and beans (very much cultivated in this county) must suffer from the drought, and especially the latter, which hate *heat* as much as wheat loves it. I tried, but in vain, to raise even Masagan beans, in Long Island. Last night there was a good deal of thunder and a very fine rain, which seems to have reached over a great part of this county. I hope it was so good as to drop a little upon Kensington, where some strawberry-beds stood very much in need of it. The hops, which the London papers told us were *blighted*, discover no such appearance here or

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at Town-Malling. They have nearly topped the poles, and are throwing out branches. They love *heat*. It is the cold that is the great cause of injury to hops. It must be a long drought indeed that goes to the bottom of their roots.—Upon the whole the crops are exceedingly promising, and, which is the protection against blight, *very early*. The rain of last night laid *flat* one small piece of wheat, and only that one which I have seen in coming eleven miles.—The wind is now (six o'clock) coming from the *North*, and the sun is come back, apparently to see the haymaking finished. A few days of rain after that, and then we shall be getting ready for harvest! What Lord Liverpool will do with the superabundance, God, who is the giver of it, only knows! I have thought, though I have kept the matter to myself, that the Collective mean to remain in "*Seance Permanente*," in order to be *ready*, in case of emergencies, arising out of this "*over-production*," and this is, perhaps, the true interpretation of the air "*Ready, boys, ready*," played at the late *Pitt-Rump* Dinner, at the close of the Lord Chancellor's speech, while that pink of independence, *Cartwright*, of Northamptonshire, was in the Chair. Certain it is, that *something* must be done with this "*over-production*." Europe and America are actually so crammed, that they are vomiting forth upon us in such a way, that we are hardly able to prevent absolute inundation even with the aid of the counsels of that wise and vigilant body that holds "*Seance Permanente*" at Henderson's Hotel, with the great WEBB at its head. What is to be done, then, if it should please God to cause our own soil to go on producing in this way? There are pits and rivers to fling it into, to be sure; but, might it not be as well; I offer it merely as a random thought; might it not be as well to set the jaws of all the labouring classes to work to grind it up, and so get rid of it?. I am aware of the presumption of putting forth suggestions, when our affairs are watched over by such "absolute wisdom;" but, to my plain understanding, it really does appear, that where the *evil* is superabundance of corn, a stout fellow, with a set of teeth, unrotted by the exhalations from an overgorged stomach, would be full as advantageously employed in grinding away corn, as in *digging holes one day and filling them up the next*, though the lat-

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ter have this in its favour, that it was engendered in the mind of our "great political philosopher." As to the jaws of the *Irish* labourers, which recent and even present circumstances might lead some persons to conclude were perfectly disposable for this species of employment, they (if we believe their landlords) are not fitted for the grinding of *corn*. Their mouths are called "*potatoe-traps;*" a sort of squeezing or pressing things, calculated to deal only with pulp, and having the recipient and ductory organs, that is to say, the hopper and the gutter, that is to say, the mouth and throat, of unusual capacity, but wholly unsuited by nature to the grinding of any thing of a more substantial kind. This is the account of the *Irish Landlords*, who, being, in general, a description of men not less remarkable for their veracity than for their humanity, we must, of course, believe, that, *while in Ireland*, the potatoe-traps are wholly inapplicable to the grinding of corn, of which we have, indeed, indubitable proof in the *fact*, that, while the English are getting together, by subscription, *potatoes* to send over to prevent the Irish from *starving*, the Irish are sending prodigious quantities of *corn* to England. But, experience, and pretty ample experience, enables me to say, that the "potatoe-traps," when removed *out of Ireland*, grind *corn* exceedingly well; and that, after a time, they perform but very indifferently their usual operations of mashing and squeezing. One thing I can assert positively, and I call thousands of employers and tavern-keepers in America to attest the truth of what I say; and that is, that it is with great reluctance that the owners of the potatoe-traps, ever, in *that country*, use them in the grinding of any thing but wheat and meat, except, perchance, in the way of amusement they try them upon apples, peaches, and melons; and I must confess that I have a hundred times seen Irish carmen *grinding*, not potatoes, but *pine-apples*, in the streets of New York. Neither do the Irish, when *out of Ireland*, prefer a hovel, without chimney, to a house with a chimney. So that, one of two things must be; namely, that the faculties of the jaws of the Irish Labourers and the taste of those labourers as to dwelling-places, undergo a total change with change of country; this *must be*; or those who assert the *traps* to be unfitted for other use, and that the owners *dislike* chimneys, must

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be the *greatest liars* and most *infamous wretches* that ever disgraced the face of this earth. Let the reader decide for himself.

WM. COBBETT.

COUNTY MEETING.

Afternoon, June 14, 1822.

A MEETING of the Freeholders of the County of Kent was yesterday holden at Maidstone, pursuant to a requisition presented to the High Sheriff (John Powell Powell, Esq.) "to consider of "a Petition to Parliament on the "Distressed state of the Country, "and the Defective Representa- "tion of the People."

The Requisition was signed by upwards of 450 of the most respectable Landed Proprietors of the County, amongst whom were the names of the Earls Thanet, Cowper, Darnley, and Jersey; Lords Sondes, Folkstone, Clifton, &c. &c.

In the early part of the morning, the Gentlemen of the County began to pour into the Town, and they continued to arrive up to the middle of the day. About eleven o'clock a person distributed among the crowd of persons assembled in and near the Market-place, a printed Address —"To the Noblemen and Gentle- "men Freeholders of the County "of Kent," calling upon them to unite their efforts in the sacred cause of Reform. In addition to this, a little Boy took his stand in the midst of the throng, holding a placard, upon which was written "Cobbett's Farmer's Wife's "Friend; or, the Duke of Buck- "ingham's Bill of Fare for Far- "mers."

At twelve o'clock, the High Sheriff, attended by the Gentlemen who were expected to take the leading part in the Meeting, took his station in one of the carts placed for the accommodation of the Speakers.

Among the Noblemen and Gentlemen present we noticed (in addition to those already mentioned) Mr. Honywood, M.P. for the County, Sir E. Knatchbull, ditto, J. L. Hodges, Esq. the Rev. J. Gambier, Rev. C. Cage, Rev. ——: Cage, J. Rider, Esq. J. Pohill, Esq. the Hon. C. Noel, Wm. Cobbett, Esq., &c. When Mr. Honywood made his appearance he was loudly cheered by the Meeting.

The HIGH SHERIFF opened the business of the day by stating, that he had convened the

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Meeting in consequence of a Requisition having been presented to him, to which were attached the names of the most respectable Gentlemen of the County.—(The Requisition was here read by the Under Sheriff.)—The High Sheriff then stated, that he should be happy to attend to every Gentleman who wished to address the Meeting, and he hoped that they would give every man a fair hearing.

It was decided, on the motion of the Earl of DARNLEY that the High Sheriff should take the Chair. A letter from Lord Sondes to the Chairman was then read. It stated his Lordship's regret at being unavoidably prevented from attending at the Meeting, but at the same time expressed his full concurrence with the objects which had brought them together.—(Applause.)

Mr. FOOTE, in coming forward to propose a Petition for the adoption of the Meeting, observed, that having already so frequently experienced the indulgence of his brother freeholders, he should feel himself wanting in respect and gratitude to them if he did not come forward and state shortly and candidly the opinions which he entertained upon the important questions before them. In the few observations which he had to offer he should not attempt any eloquent illustration, nor trespass upon their time by any display of argument; the former he did not possess, the latter he was sure was totally unnecessary. There were, however, a few facts which he felt it necessary to lay before them. He should neither use flattery nor adulation in what he had to offer. He felt that it was necessary to speak out when they came to consider the distresses and grievances under which the country laboured.—(Hear, hear.)—In such a case it would be culpable to flatter, and treacherous to deceive. The present condition of the British farmer was alarming and perilous in the extreme; his sufferings were greater than could be easily imagined. He was reduced to the last state of depreciation and decay. In no former period had he been worn down to such a state of destitution.—(Hear, hear.)—It was true that a few taxes had been recently remitted, but in reality no relief had been afforded to the agriculturist. What was the actual state of things as it respected the farmers. They found low prices in the market, while the poors'-rate and the other charges accumulated upon them in a most alarming degree.—(Hear, hear.)—It was an incontrovertible fact, that there were in every part of the empire numerous families anxious to obtain work, and able to do it, who were obliged to resort to their parishes for relief in the absence of employment. It was the case of thousands; and what were they to expect in such a state of things? It was known that industry was the main spring of the poor man's life; with industry he was equal to his landlord in his little comforts and in his independence; without it, it was impossible that he could avoid starvation, or the most abject dependence.—(Hear, hear.)—It was not his intention to take up the time of the Meeting by entering into a detail of the distresses under which the agri-

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culturists laboured. But he could not help observing, there did exist a set of persons who objected to granting any relief to agriculturists, on the ground that it would go to prejudice commerce and manufactures. For himself, he must confess that he was unable to perceive what injury could by possibility be inflicted on any other class of society by granting the relief which the agriculturist now claimed. But to afford effectual relief, they must bring about a Reform in the Representation of the People in Parliament. It was now an undenied fact, that almost all persons, not only in towns but in every part of the country, were not only anxious but clamorous for Reform.—(Hear, hear.)—In preferring their prayer for Reform, they asked for nothing new; they proposed no wild or visionary doctrine; they advocated no experimental project, no theoretical scheme.—(Applause.)—If asked what he meant by his Plan of Reform, he should answer that he wished to circumscribe the influence of the Crown; to shorten the duration of Parliaments; to extend the right of voting from freehold to copyhold property; and to increase the number of Members for populous towns in proportion to the present number of Borough Members.—(Applause.)—If he were asked further what he meant by Reform, he should say that he wished to increase the number of Independent Members in Parliament; that he was anxious to add to the number of that patriot band who so zealously supported the measure lately proposed by that able and virtuous young Nobleman, Lord John Russell.—(Loud applause.)—That Nobleman supported his plan of Reform with an ability and an energy seldom equalled and never surpassed: and by so doing had succeeded in making more converts to the cause of Reform than any other gentleman who had recently advocated that great measure.—(Cheers.)—For himself he must observe, that though he derived great pleasure from the measure and the eloquence of that Noble Lord, he felt no surprise at the one or the other having emanated from his powerful and commanding intellect. He (Lord J. Russell) inherited and acted upon the principles of his illustrious ancestors.—(Applause.)—He wished to watch over and support the fabric of the Constitution with a jealous but laudable partiality. He looked to it as his birthright, and was most desirous that it should not be placed at the will or caprice of any Minister, or set of Ministers. In a word, he wished to see the laws of the country administered in their spirit and letter.—(Applause.)—He should not detain the Meeting further, as he was aware that many Gentlemen possessing much greater ability than he could presume to, were about to address them. He should, therefore, proceed to read the Petition which he intended to propose for their consideration.—The Honourable Gentleman then read the following Petition:—

The humble Petition, &c. sheweth,

That your Petitioners have waited with the utmost anxiety, to see what measures of relief would be proposed by your Honourable House, in consequence of the representations of distress which

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have been from time to time urged by your Petitioners, in common with other counties; and though by the proceedings of your Honourable House they observe the distress is fully admitted, the measures that have been founded thereon are futile, and inadequate to the wants and wishes of your Petitioners, and aggravate by disappointment the severe sufferings under which they labour.

The evils and grievances of which your Petitioners have complained, have now risen to a height that imperiously calls for great and efficient remedies; and they earnestly demand of your Honourable House that redress which it has the power, and ought to have the inclination, to afford.

Your Petitioners have seen every abuse defended, and every proposal for efficient retrenchment rejected, or so modified as to become insignificant; and they once more implore your Honourable House to consider what relief may be obtained by a real and efficient economy, a reduction of useless places, and a further diminution of the weight of taxation, which so grievously oppresses all classes of the people. They have particularly noticed the application of no less a sum than 5,000,000*l.* to the establishment of a Sinking Fund, at a moment when the burthen of taxation is so severely felt; and they submit to your consideration whether, at such a moment, such a sum should be exacted, for the establishment of a fund, the benefit of which must be remote, if not, as it has hitherto proved, completely delusive? The distress which now so heavily presses upon your Petitioners, and which is daily increasing, arises evidently, in a great degree, out of the extravagant waste of public money, sanctioned by your Honourable House; and your Petitioners are thoroughly persuaded, that such a misapplication of the public money never could have taken place, or, having taken place, the obvious remedy to be found, in economy and retrenchment, would not have been so long neglected, if public opinion and the public interest had their due weight in the deliberations of your Honourable House; and it is thereby become manifest to your Petitioners, that a full and fair representation of the people is most urgent and indispensable for the correction of present abuses, and for security against their recurrence. Your Petitioners, therefore, request that your Honourable House will resolve forthwith to enter upon the great work of reforming the Representation, as by this alone can your Honourable House regain the confidence of the people, which has been forfeited by the system of measures hitherto pursued, and sanctioned by your Honourable House.

By the fatal mismanagement of the affairs of the country, one part of the empire is reduced to a state of actual famine, while your Petitioners are suffering severely in the midst of abundance. The capital employed in Agriculture is nearly exhausted; and numbers of those who cultivate inferior soils are daily reduced to beggary and pauperism, while ruin and general bankruptcy threaten every class of cultivators, who in their fall must shake the very foundation of the Empire.

Deeply affected with these calamities, your Petitioners cannot view, without indignation, the gross misapplication of the national resources employed to establish a corrupt influence in your Honourable House, which has been openly avowed and unblushingly defended; by which their representatives are seduced from their duty, the spirit of the Constitution is violated, and every attempt at efficient retrenchment shamefully eluded.

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Your Petitioners call upon your Honourable House to shake off this baneful influence which has hitherto paralyzed all your proceedings, and to give them in spirit and in truth, that Retrenchment and Reform which the critical situation of the country, and the abuses in your Honourable House imperiously demand, which alone can save our country from convulsion, give stability to the Throne, and perpetuate the Constitution.

And your Petitioners further humbly pray that your Honourable House will be pleased to make a just reduction of the Interest of the National Debt, as soon as you have completed a Reform of your Honourable House.

[This part in *italics* was the part afterwards moved by Mr. Cobbett.]

He observed, in conclusion, that he should not trespass much further on their attention, but he could not conclude without congratulating his Brother-Freeholders upon the respectability of the Meeting of that day. Upon no other occasion had they witnessed so large and so respectable a Meeting. By thus assembling upon that important occasion they had disappointed the hirelings of Ministers; they had done more—they had shown to Ministers themselves, that, if they wished to procure fawning and flattering sycophants, they must not look for them amongst the sturdy Freeholders of the County of Kent.—(Loud applause.)

Mr. RIDER came forward to second the Resolutions. The objects of the Meeting were twofold,—they had assembled to consider of the distresses by which they were pressed down, and the best means of remedying those distresses. No man doubted that at the present time the people were obliged to pay in taxes a great proportion of money which ought to remain in their pockets.—(Applause)—The main causes of the calamities under which the country laboured, might be traced to an imprudent alteration of the currency;—an overwhelming pressure of taxation;—and though last, not least, a total disregard of the prayers and petitions of the people. What had been the fate of the complaints and prayers of the people recently preferred to Parliament? Why, their Petitions had been read;—had been placed on the Table—or perhaps under the Table.—(Applause.)—But what else had been done? Had any attention been paid to them;—had any redress been granted? None, none whatever. The people, however, ignorant of the proceedings of Parliament, at least knew this, that their Petitions were not attended to;—that they produced no beneficial change in their favour.—(Applause.)—There was, however, a remedy which, if tried, would prove beneficial;—he meant Parliamentary Reform. Without this, as had been ably stated in the Petition, the country must necessarily be ruined. He should enter into a short comparison of the present and former times. In 1792 the whole revenue of the country amounted to no more than 19,000,000*l.*; at present it was 71,000,000*l.* Could it be wondered at, then, that the people were likely to be starved, or pressed down to the lowest degree? In 1792 the armed force of the country amounted to 86,000 men, and the charge for their mainte-

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nance was 2,300,000*l.* In 1821 the number of men was 243,000, and the charge to the country 8,300,000*l.* making three times the number of men kept up in 1792, and four times the expense incurred at that period; and this too, be it observed, in a period of profound peace, and when they were told from the Throne that there never was a moment at which our foreign relations were in a more perfect state of tranquillity and peace.—(Applause.) —It had been objected that the questions of Agricultural Distress and Parliamentary Reform had been mixed up; for his part he could not see how they could with propriety be separated: the one in fact was the only remedy that could be applied to the other. It was known, and could not be denied, that there was in the House of Commons a party of Members who were paid out of the pockets of the people; a set of men who had nothing to do, but who were drilled and commanded by a Secretary of the Treasury, in the same manner that a Serjeant-major would drill a company of horse, and who were not only expected, but commanded to go down to the House of Commons, and vote in favour of such measure as it pleased the Minister of the Crown to adopt.—(Cheers.) But this state of things was called "the influence of the Crown," and was not only avowed, but defended in the House of Commons by the Marquis of Londonderry. —(Applause.) This accounted for the extravagant manner in which the money of the people was expended. If this, then, was the case, where, he would ask, was the use of sending independent Members to Parliament? The thing was in vain; for though they sent such able and independent men as Mr. Honywood into Parliament, the Minister had the power of overwhelming them by corrupted majorities—by men who were bought and sold by places and pensions either for themselves or their relations.—(Applause.) He should now state one or two facts which would astonish the Meeting. The Requisition by which that Meeting was convened had been signed by upwards of four hundred and fifty of the most respectable landed proprietors of the county, and yet it was urged that the cause of Reform had never been advocated by persons of respectability. If there were no other contradiction, that Meeting would give the lie to such an assertion.—(Loud Applause.) There were attached to the late Requisition, independently of the Noblemen already mentioned, the names of 169 Gentlemen who possessed 50,000 acres of land in the county. The county had, however, entered upon the question of Reform, and they must succeed. They had only to persevere, and they must gain ground. They ought to meet, and meet and meet again;—they ought to show to Ministers, that they were determined to persevere without flinching, and in the end they must be successful.—(Applause.) They must go on, and if the present Petition was not sufficiently strong, they must couch the next in stronger language; he entreated them not to slacken their efforts; he should be sorry to have it said that for want of a seasonable and manly exertion they died in the ditches of their own farm.

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The Earl of DARNLEY felt it incumbent upon him to offer a few observations upon the present Petition; the more especially because of his having on a former occasion, when the distresses of the country were great, refused to sign a similar Requisition. He refused upon that occasion, because he felt that the wishes of the people must end in disappointment. He did not mean to say, that Parliament was perfect, or that he could place any confidence in its virtue, any more than those persons did who stood around him; but even if he did entertain such an opinion, still he must say that no relief could be afforded to the public distresses, except by a diminution of taxation.—(Applause.)—It was out of the power of the Parliament to afford any relief to the public distresses by any other means. This arose, not so much out of the defects of the present, as of former Houses of Parliament. It arose, in fact, from those former Parliaments not having exercised a vigilant and proper control over the expenditure of Ministers. This carelessness it was that had brought upon the country the accumulated burden of debt under which it now laboured. Having, however, seen the present requisition embracing two points, namely, agricultural distress, and the acknowledged deficiency in the representation of the people, he could not refuse his signature to it, and therefore it was that, as a Freeholder of the county of Kent, he was present. The great cause of the distresses of the country was taxation, and of that they must get rid in a great degree, or else they must sink under it. He regretted much having heard in a House of which he was a member, a Noble Duke, for whom he must of course have the highest respect (as he was the only person with the exception of the brave Wellington, who had within the last sixty years received the highest honours of the Peerage;) he regretted, he said, having heard that Noble Duke declare that taxation fell but lightly on the farmer. This was a doctrine which every practical man must reprobate.—The farmer was pressed down, not only by direct but by indirect taxation.—(Applause.)—He paid taxes, not only on his hops, salt, leather, &c., but he was met at every turn by indirect taxation.—(Hear, hear.)—While he was obliged to sell cheap, he was compelled to purchase every thing at a dear rate. Not only the farmer, but the labourer, was thus met by the taxes, and the farmer must make up his charge upon the labourer—either in wages or in poors'-rate; and in this way a difference, not of five, but of fifty per cent. was made in his property.—Having touched so far on the grievances, he now came to the remedy. He differed in some minor points, though he concurred generally in the prayer of the Petition. He could not, however, as an honest Englishman, support any prayer for relief at the expense of other classes of the community.—(Cheers.)—There were also persons who thought that relief ought to be given by defrauding the public creditor. This he should most decidedly set his face against. The time might possibly come when a national bankruptcy would take place; but while able, they

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were bound to pay their honest debts. It mattered not how our burdens were incurred, or if it did, it was for those Members who had supported Ministers in their long and unjustifiable career of extravagant expenditure to answer for and defend their conduct. But while they were able they were bound to pay the public creditor, unless indeed that period arrived which would compel them to call their creditors together, and pay so much in the pound. The only way to avoid this desperate alternative was to reduce taxation—to adopt economy in our public expenditure, by reducing our establishments at home and abroad, both civil and military.—(Applause.)—He next came to Parliamentary Reform, a subject always difficult and delicate to be touched upon. He had not hitherto expressed any decided opinion upon it; but knowing, as he did, the wishes, not only of the county, but of the country at large, he felt it necessary to come to the conclusion that some sort of Reform was necessary. Then came the question, how was this Reform to be obtained, without revolution and bloodshed, or else by the act of the House of Commons itself? It was true that the House might reform itself, yet the operation would be a tardy one. They ought, however, to recollect that the next election was not very far distant. The Freeholders of the County would then have an opportunity of giving their votes in favour of independent men. If the people of England wished seriously for Reform, they had only to vote in favour of those men who, when elected Members of Parliament, would be the zealous defenders of their rights and liberties.—(Cheers.) Let this be done in the County of Kent; let the example be followed in the other counties throughout the kingdom, and then, and not till then, would an effectual Reform in Parliament be effected.—(Cheers.)

Sir E. KNATCHBULL.—In the situation which he had the honour to stand as one of the Members for the County, he should feel guilty of a gross neglect of duty if he declined making a few observations upon the present occasion. He had to request the indulgence of the Meeting while he delivered to them those opinions, which however they might militate against their sentiments, were conscientiously entertained by him.—(Hear, hear.) He felt it necessary to observe, that his public duty alone compelled him to attend the Meeting upon that occasion. Attending, however, as he did, he felt it incumbent upon him to offer, with all deference and humility, his opinions upon the two subjects, the discussion of which called them together. He regretted that the questions of Agricultural Distress and Parliamentary Reform had been mixed up, as such a mixture could only have the tendency of dividing opinions, and weakening a cause which all were anxious to support. He was most anxious to give, as he had hitherto done, his zealous support to every measure calculated to afford relief to the Agricultural interests; but upon the question of Reform he differed from the Gentleman who had spoken before him. The Hon. Baronet, whose speech we regret

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to state we are prevented, by the lateness of the hour as well as from a press of other matter, from giving, expressed his regret that the Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Foote) had not taken the opportunity of informing the Agricultural Committee of his newly-divulged secret with respect to the importation into this country of Foreign under the denomination of Irish Corn. He also denied the existence of such corrupt influence in Parliament as had been stated; or if it did exist, he pledged himself that he was ignorant of it. Adverting to what had been said of the pressure of taxation, he stated that 4,000,000*l.* of taxes had been recently taken off—a pretty strong proof that the calumniated House of Commons was not so bad as it had been described.—(Applause.)

Mr. RIDER, in an eloquent address, which the causes already alluded to prevent us from reporting, supported the prayer of the Petition.

After a few words in explanation between Mr. Foote and Sir Edward Knatchbull, relative to the importation of Foreign under the name of Irish corn,

Mr. LARKIN addressed the Meeting, and forcibly impressed upon the Meeting the absolute necessity of Parliamentary Reform.

Mr. HONYWOOD, in an animated and energetic address, pointed out the necessity of adhering strenuously to the cause of Reform, and assured the Meeting that he should ever, whether their Representative or otherwise, feel the warmest interest in the prayers and petitions which came from the Freeholders of the County of Kent.—(Applause.)

Mr. HODGES supported the prayer of the Petition, and congratulated the Meeting upon the very great increase which had taken place in the number and respectability of the supporters of Parliamentary Reform. By persevering in their efforts they would hold out to Europe the proud example of a nation correcting the abuses of its Government without revolution or bloodshed, but solely by the influence of public opinion.—(Hear, hear.)

Mr. COBBETT, who had taken his station in one of the wagons placed at some distance from that occupied by the High Sheriff, stood forward to address the Meeting, and was assailed by loud cries of—off, off! no, no! he is not a Freeholder! mixed with cries of—he is! he is! this is unfair! bear every man, &c.

The UNDER-SHERIFF (a Mr. Farmer, we believe,) here asked Mr. Cobbett whether he was a Freeholder?

Mr. COBBETT—I am, Sir.

[Some Gentlemen near the High Sheriff here observed, that the Gentleman might be a Freeholder, but not of the County of Kent.]

The SHERIFF (to Mr. Cobbett)—Are you, Sir, a Freeholder of the County of Kent?

Mr. COBBETT—I am a Freeholder of the County of Kent, Sir.

[While this conversation was passing, there was a most discordant mixture of applause and disapprobation kept up by dif-

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ferent parties. Silence having been at length restored]—

Mr. COBBETT proceeded. It was not originally his intention to have offered a single observation to the Meeting, but a slight omission or two made by the Noble Lord (Darnley), and the other Gentlemen who had spoken, induced him to come forward. Some Gentlemen had stated that they had never before seen so numerous and respectable a Meeting in the County of Kent; but they should, in common fairness, in common justice recollect before they made a boast of having the names of four hundred respectable people to a Requisition (he did not himself know the Requisitionists, but he had no doubt they were respectable, and he was glad it was so); yet, before they made that boast, they ought to recollect that it was the Radicals, the men who had in 1817 been sent to prison for advocating the same doctrine, who had originally presented a Petition to Parliament on the subject. What did the persecuted people of that period ask? Why, they asked nothing more or less than that which was now asked and prayed for by the Nobles and Gentry of the County of Kent—they only prayed for a reduction of taxation—a reduction of the salaries in the public departments, the abolition of sinecure places and pensions, and a Reform in the House of Commons—they were put in prison for this, and now the Lords and landed proprietors of the County of Kent came forward with the same prayer; and (said Mr. Cobbett) let me tell the Noble Lords who are now here; let me tell the man in the flannel waistcoat who stands on the opposite wagon, that they will not save their estates, and that he will not preserve his remnant of independence, unless they receive the co-operation of those men who were a few years ago crammed into prison for supporting the very doctrines so much lauded at the present period. Let the Noble Lords recollect, that by a perseverance in the present system, they must be pillaged of their last acre. Let them understand that without a reduction of taxation there is no safety for them—let the persons too, the body of the people, those men who were sent to prison for maintaining those doctrines, now turn towards those Noble Lords and say, We know well you had no feeling for us; nevertheless we shall feel for you.—(Cheers.)—Much had been said about Reform in Parliament—the distress was admitted on all hands—the corrupt influence exercised in the election of Members was admitted, and so also was the necessity of Reform; but little or nothing had been said as to the mode by which that Reform was to be brought about. He would not then enter on the question of Annual Parliaments. The Noble Lord (Darnley) had intimated that there should be an Act of Parliament to bring about that Reform; why, to be sure, there must be such an Act; but, could any man of common sense or understanding expect that the House of Commons would reform itself merely upon the people asking them loosely to do so?—The Noble Lord had said that a great step towards Reform would be the independent election for

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popular towns. Now his objection to that was, in the first instance, there would be a long time to wait. If agricultural distress was not relieved until then, agriculturists he feared would be in a very bad way; but supposing that period to have arrived, where would be the chance of their election being more free or open than before? The way—the only and effectual way to bring about Reform was to press, legally mind, upon the proper authorities its absolute necessity. The members did not take their seats of their own accord, neither did they go in by the authority of the people at large; but they did go in, or at least a great majority of them did, by the influence of some 150 Peers or Gentlemen of large landed property. In short, if they wished for an effectual Reform, the right way to proceed was to Petition the Peers to abolish the Boroughs which were in their gifts. They indeed talk of blasphemy and sedition, and riot and confusion; they talk of corruption and corrupt influence. Why, if they wished to put an end to that corruption, let them openly and honestly walk down with their dirty burgage tenure-deeds in their hands, and say, "Take them for ever from our sight."—That would be the most effectual mode of Reform.—(Applause.)—If they do not do so, they will (said Mr. Cobbett) witness scenes in this country which I wish not to contemplate. My opinion, however, is, that in their efforts to keep their boroughs, they may risk their estates and every thing else which belongs to them.—There is not in the country an honest Nobleman who will not thank me for stating these opinions, and until what I now recommend be done, no man need expect to see an effectual Reform. The Petition was right, at least as far as it went, though he, perhaps, differed in some points from it; but what he should recommend would be, that the Yeomanry of the County of Kent—that the Yeomanry of every County in England should Petition the Peers to give up this influence which they possessed. If this were done, he had no doubt that even in the present Parliament, the Reform which he had recommended would be brought about. If any Nobleman who heard him possessed such influence in that county, let him manfully lead the way. It had been said, and they all felt it, that taxation was the cause of the distress under which they laboured; but no one had clearly pointed out how the grievance was to be removed. It had been said, "Let us be just," he said so too—let them be just even to Castlereagh—even to him was he ready to deal out even-handed justice.—But they must admit that it would be unfair to ask him to reduce taxation, unless there was a corresponding reduction of expenditure to meet it. A good deal had been said about retrenchment and economy, and it was true that little reduction had taken place,—but let the Meeting hear this; he prayed their attention, and, if they did not now agree with him, he was confident that they would do so in a short time—that there could be no effectual reduction of taxation—no effectual relief afforded to the country, until they reduced the National Debt. They had been told, and truly, that the present

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amount of taxation was near 70 millions a-year (including expenses of collecting). Now how were they to reduce it? Suppose that they had reduced half the army, and half the navy, and all the Civil List, and all or a great proportion of public places and emoluments, still they could not bring the expenditure of the country down to 40,000,000*l.*; so that, in fact, there would still be a difference of more than 20,000,000*l.* between our present expenditure and that of 1792. The Noble Lord and Hon. Baronet said, they would pay to the last moment,—did they mean to say they would go on paying till they were dead and stiff? Or did they mean to go on till each Englishman shall appear like the famished and forlorn picture of Ireland, which in accordance, he supposed, with modern refinements in taste, was hung lately up before the King at the Opera House? Ah! no—they meant no such thing—they only used words, the meaning of which they did not clearly understand. If, indeed, the Noble Lord meant to pay till he came to his last shilling, he might certainly pay it; but he (Mr. Cobbett) must take leave to assure him that he would come to that. The Honourable Gentleman, after observing that as far as he was concerned he was little affected by taxation, as he used but few articles subject to duties, observed that the debt was the cause of all the ruin. To collect the taxes necessary for it required a large army; it required about four millions a-year to be paid to tax-gatherers; so that nothing *effectual* could be done in the way of reduction of taxation, unless we began with the debt. This evil the landlord would gladly remove, were it not that we tack a rider to it—we say we will have Reform—in fact the Borough-mongers stood between the nation and its happiness. They did not know what to do—they said, "Why the devil should we be deprived of the influence of our boroughs?" But he answered this by saying, "Why the devil should the people be obliged to pay all these taxes?" He was anxious to support the Petition; but he was anxious to prevent the child in the cradle from being mortgaged to the Jews and Jobbers of 'Change-alley. With this view he would move an addition to the Petition; with a view to prevent all the useful classes of Society from being robbed by a set of Jews and Jobbers, who had always in their mouths the cry of national faith and national honour, while they were anxious only to promote their sordid interests, and their selfish and ungenerous views. He concluded by proposing that the following be added to and make a part of the Petition:—

"And your Petitioners further most humbly pray that your Honourable House will cause a just reduction of the interest of the National Debt, as soon as you have completed a Reform of your Honourable House.

The Earl DARNLEY said, that he had never before had the pleasure of seeing the Gentleman who had last spoken—a Gentleman who was known to every body by his writings, and for whose powers of mind he in common with the rest of the world felt great respect. In

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answer to what that Gentleman observed, he felt it necessary to state, that it would in his mind be unfair in those persons who had supported the extravagant projects of Ministers, to turn round and say "Now we are in distress, and are determined to pay so much in the pound." He (Lord D.) as an honest man, was of opinion that they were bound to pay their public and private debts as long as they were able. Mr. Cobbett had spoken of Radical Reform, which he, (the Earl of Darnley) supposed meant Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage. Now surely Mr. Cobbett had too much sense not to know, that if such a plan was to take place, it would end in depriving all who heard him of whatever property they possessed, and would lead to nothing short of revolution.

Mr. COBBETT said, he saw no injustice in lowering the interest of the debt. He would ask, did they not pay the public creditor honestly till 1814; and if so, why were they now to give him three bushels of corn, when before that period they only gave him one? One part of honesty was to be sincere; and he requested the Meeting to show themselves honest by declaring in their Petition what they all thought and wished. He had spoken delicately on the subject of Reform; but if the Noble Lord forced him to it, he must say, that in his opinion, every man who might be forced to take arms in defence of that Noble Lord's property, was deserving of a vote in the elections of those persons by whom his life and his property, however humble, were to be protected. If that were the case, the property of the Noble Lord would be safe; if that were the case, the Freeholders of Kent would not see the disgraceful anomaly of the Electors holding one opinion, and one of their Members another.—(Cheers.) They would not see their Representatives, like an angry man and wife in a post chaise, one looking out of one window and one out of the other.

A desultory conversation then took place as to the mode in which the question should be put by the Sheriff.

Mr. FOOTE and Mr. RIDER expressed their willingness to adopt the suggestion of Mr. Cobbett.

Lord DARNLEY stated, that he would hold up his hand against the Petition, if the clause proposed by Mr. Cobbett were agreed to.

The Petition, with Mr. Cobbett's Amendment, was then put, and carried by an immense majority, there being scarcely three hands held up against it.

Mr. RIDER moved, that the Thanks of the Meeting be given to that indefatigable economist, Mr. Hume.

Mr. DARRELL seconded the motion; but the Sheriff refused to put the question, as the subject was not included in the Requisition.

Thanks were now voted to the Sheriff. After which, on the suggestion of Mr. Cobbett, the motion for thanks having been rejected by the Sheriff, the assembly gave three cheers, as a mark of respect to Mr. Hume. They then dispersed.

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REMARKS.

The Report of the proceedings of this Meeting we have taken from the *Morning Chronicle*, and another morning paper. It is a mere sketch, as our readers will readily imagine when they are told that there was at least three hours and a half of speaking; and, as far as we have observed such meetings, the speaking in general was of the best character usually employed upon such occasions. In the Report in the *Chronicle*, there were some inaccuracies which we have corrected in our paper. To do justice to the speech, or rather speeches of Mr. LARKIN, of which we very much regret that we have, in fact, *no report*, would really not be an easy task. We have seldom witnessed greater ability or more neatness of delivery than we witnessed in that Gentleman yesterday. Sir E. KNATCHBULL was alone. He had the load of unpopularity to sustain, and (a task which Demosthenes himself could not have performed) he had to apologize for the conduct of the Ministers and their supporters; and he had to do this single-handed. He did it, however, with a great deal of quickness and ingenuity. Feeling that it was not to the voice of the people that he owed his seat, he was bold notwithstanding the very unequivocal disapprobation of a Meeting which he himself acknowledged to be the largest and most respectable he had ever seen in the county. Our readers, by reference to the Report, will perceive that something of very great importance to the whole country was brought forward at this Meeting; namely, a proposition, in direct terms, to pray the Parliament *to reduce the interest of the National Debt*. This proposition, brought forward, not by the Noble Lords and great landed Gentlemen of the County; but by an individual almost wholly unknown personally to the Meeting; possessing no influence in the county whatever, except that which he derived from the nature of the proposition itself, and a statement of the grounds upon which he made it: this proposition, thus brought forward, after a most ample discussion, which occupied more than an hour after the proposition was started; this proposition, twice put to the Meeting, and twice carried, unanimously, we may call it; for, out of many thousands of persons, only about four hands were held up against it; this proposition, thus declared to be the

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decided opinion and wish, and prayer of certainly one of the most opulent Counties in the Kingdom, is, in our opinion, of far greater importance than any thing else that has come under our observation for many months past. Lions are not painters, said the lion to the man in the fable: and, as we hold the pen and have the paper before us, which is not the case with other gentlemen who spoke at the Meeting, we shall not here take advantage of this circumstance to add to that which appears in the Report, given by the morning papers, certainly with wonderful accuracy, if we consider the difficulties to be contended with by the Gentlemen whose business it was to make the Report.—This only, which is common to all the parties concerned, we beg leave to press upon the attention of our readers; that the Meeting was of that character as to speak decidedly, the *sentiments of the whole county*. Sir E. KNATCHBULL most unequivocally, though rather reluctantly acknowledged this, upon being called upon for the acknowledgment by Mr. LARKIN. It was stated at the Meeting, that besides the Peers, the Peers' sons, and great landholders who signed the requisition, there were 400 persons who signed it, owning, amongst them 50,000 *acres of land in the county*. These were, doubtless all or nearly all of them present at the Meeting; and, besides, the Meeting was very numerous, and there needed only to look at the persons present to be convinced that the main part of them were persons of substance as to property. The very spot where they were assembled is one of the most fertile and valuable in the whole kingdom. There was no haste in adopting the proposition. Plenty of time to remove any fallacy or misrepresentation in the grounds of it. If the Mover had made use of any fallacy or misrepresentation. Plenty of time for little knots of friends and acquaintances to consult each other's feelings; Sir E. KNATCHBULL, after the proposition had once been put and carried, having observed that some Gentlemen near him had *not understood the question*, it was at the request of the mover, distinctly put a second time. A Gentleman who had seconded the Motion, had, on account of some addition which he wished to have made to the motion being rejected by the Mover, *withdrawn his seconding*. This gave rise to a somewhat critical examination into the meaning of every word

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of the Motion. In short, never was a proposition more amply discussed, more closely scrutinized; and after all this, the Meeting, such as we have truly described it to be, decided that the prayer of this Proposition was their prayer; and in thus deciding, they fairly and fully decided for one of the first Counties in the Kingdom. For our own parts, we know well that there is no relief, that there is no political salvation for this country, but in acting upon this proposition; and it was with great pleasure that we perceived Gentlemen of large fortune and high character in the county ready to adopt the proposition *as their own*. Mr. FOOTE, who moved the Petition, was ready to move that this addition should stand a part of it. Mr. DARRELL, jun. was ready to second Mr. FOOTE in this, as was also Mr. RIDER, who seconded the Petition. Here then, the County spoke out honestly; and we trust that the Gentlemen in Kent have set an example that will be followed by the rest of the Kingdom. There was little merit in making the proposition, which the Mover well knew, as he observed, was the real wish of every man that wished well to the country. The merit belongs to the Meeting, and to those Gentlemen of the County, who had the spirit and the honesty openly to declare by their lips that which was passing in their minds.

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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TO THE

FREEHOLDERS

OF THE

COUNTY OF KENT.

On their Petition for a Reduction of the Interest of the Debt.

Kensington, 20th June 1822.

GENTLEMEN,

OUR Petition, agreed to, at Maidstone, on the 11th instant, has made a greater stir in the Kingdom, than any other thing within my memory. It contained that which was well calculated to produce such effect; for, it prayed for "*a just reduction of the interest of the National Debt,*" a prayer proposed by me, and adopted by you.

It was not to be expected, that such a proposition, and coming from so great, so opulent and so well-informed a part of the Kingdom, would fail to excite great attention, and to call forth bitter reproaches from all those whose interests were opposed to measures to be founded upon it. Such reproaches, from such quarters it has called forth. These reproaches have been rung in your ears; and more especially in mine, who have been called by all the vile names generally bestowed on constables by thieves. It seems necessary, therefore, that I defend myself; or, rather, that I defend my proposition: in doing which I must necessarily defend your conduct upon the occasion referred to.

The proposition has been said to have been suddenly and un-

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expectedly made; that it took you by surprise; that it was not the result of the reflection of the Meeting. I shall observe upon these assertions before I proceed to prove that the thing was just; because, though the proposition was manifestly consonant with my own opinions, entertained for a great many years, I am aware, and very well aware, that those opinions derive their weight in this case from their having received your sanction and your adoption. It is very well known to you, then, that the petition, without the addition of this stinging clause, had been proposed by Mr. Foote, seconded by Mr. Rider, supported by my Lord Darnley, opposed by Sir E. Knatchbull, who had been answered by Mr. Larkin, and most ably and satisfactorily answered, too: you know that the thing was in this state, and the question about to be put upon the petition, when I offered myself to the notice of the Meeting. My reasoning was this: "You pray for reduction of taxes. "It is unreasonable to pray for "reduction of taxes, unless you "tell the Ministers that you will "support them in the measures "necessary to enable them to re- "duce taxes. The *National Debt*, "as it is vulgarly called (for the "*law* calls it no such thing) de- "mands, including expense of "collection, expenses of manage- "ment, and expenses of Sinking "Fund, which is neither more nor "less than so much money given "to the fundholders annually; all "these demand *forty millions* "*a-year*. The whole collection "in Great Britain makes about "sixty millions. The army is "absolutely necessary to the col- "lection of the taxes; because, "in such a state of taxation and "such a state of suffering, it is "impossible, consistently with the "safety of the public peace, to "go on without a large army. "The Debt, therefore, is the chief "cause of the army. It is the "cause, too, of numerous other ex- "pensive establishments. There- "fore, unless you say something

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"that shall let the Minister see "that you will support him in "reducing the interest of the "Debt, it appears to me that your "prayer for the reduction of taxes "is unreasonable; and that the "blame you cast on him on ac-"count of the weight of taxes, "and on account of your own "acute sufferings is unjust."

This was the argument on which I founded my proposition; observing, however, at the same time, that you might not, perhaps, be ready, at that moment, to agree with me, but expressing my firm conviction that in six months' time you would be ready to agree with me; and, at any rate, declaring my determination to put your opinions to the test, by moving a specific proposition, praying for a reduction of the interest of the Debt. And here something took place, which none of my revilers have had the candour to notice. The moment I said that I would put your opinions to the test, that moment my voice was drowned by that immense Meeting crying out "*Move! Move! Move!*" So that, the motion was yours, Gentlemen, much more than it was mine. I knew the power of misrepresentation; I knew the power of delusion; I knew all the arts that have been used for these purposes; but I over-rated their effects upon your minds. You understood the subject as well as I did; and it was I that was "*taken by surprise*," and not you. I was prepared and resolved to make my motion; but I was prepared with nothing written; and had to trust to my memory for the repeating of the proposition, so as to make it the same after discussion as it was when first delivered. It was I, therefore, I repeat, that was taken by surprise, and not the Meeting.

The Petition has been asserted not to have been the result of your *reflection*. It is well known to every man that was present, that the motion made to you by me occupied a *whole hour in discussion*; that what was going on was not only not talk for talk sake,

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but real fact and argument. My Lord Darnley spoke twice upon the subject. His Lordship was answered in small part only by myself; but most completely by Mr. Larkin, who refuted, in my opinion, every argument and set aside every objection advanced against the proposition, which, as you well know, was finally carried in a way that may be fairly called unanimous; there being, out of the thousands of persons present, only three to hold up their hands against it. Our adversaries choose to forget, too, that Mr. Foote, the Mover of the original Petition, and Mr. Rider, the Seconder of that Petition, expressed openly and manfully, their readiness to adopt the clause proposed by me; and that Mr. Darrell, not perceiving Mr. Rider to be ready, rose even before him to second this proposition of Mr. Foote. The fact is, Gentlemen, that the proposition was not nearly so much mine as yours. It was a thing merely uttered by me. It emanated from your thoughts and your conviction; and I ought to be considered, in this case, as merely your secretary or clerk.

These facts being notorious as they are throughout the County of Kent, it does seem to have required in Sir E. Knatchbull a considerable portion of that quality usually imputed to Irishmen, to tell the House of Commons, that nine-tenths of the people of Kent reprobated such a proposition; and it seems to have required something in Mr. Calcraft, something even beyond that possessed by Sir E. Knatchbull, to say, that if he had been at Maidstone, he would have made the proposer take his horse and get away home as fast as he could. I greatly question Mr. Calcraft's power to have opposed the proposition with half the effect that it was opposed by my Lord Darnley; and as to the assertion of Sir E. Knatchbull, the question put to him by Mr. Western was quite conclusive: "*Where* were your nine-tenths on that day?"

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To be sure, where were his nine-tenths? He had some friends about him, at any rate; why did not those few friends hold up their hands? It is useless; it is a waste of time, to ask questions of such a nature. The fact is, that those friends, as well as himself, agreed with the proposition in their hearts, though for reasons sufficiently evident to persons conversant with the matter, they did not choose and do not choose openly to avow that agreement.

But, though it be so notorious; so perfectly indisputable that this Petition as thus amended, spoke the sense of the County of Kent, it does not follow that the petition was as indisputably *just in its prayer*. You are liable to err as well as other men; and, in order to prove that your prayer is right, it is not sufficient to say that it comes from your unanimous voice. Before we doubt, however, of the prayer being right, we might fairly demand of our adversaries to offer us something like *argument*, in order to show that it is *wrong*. I offered arguments in support of the proposition; Lord Darnley offered arguments against it; Mr. Larkin answered those arguments by others; you were the judges in the case; and after, with most exemplary patience and decorum of behaviour, listening to the arguments of both sides, you decided that a *reduction of the interest of the Debt ought to take place*.

This was not only a regular mode of proceeding; but it showed that you *did reflect;* and it showed further, and beyond all question, that the subject propounded was one on which you had long reflected. At any rate, you did not decide till you had heard the arguments on both sides; nay, it having been suggested by Sir E. Knatchbull, that some persons had voted for the proposition *in mistake*, the proposition was deliberately put again, in order that nothing might be done without a clear understanding of it; and this produced, as you well

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recollect, only three hands held up instead of the former six. This was real deliberation; here was every thing calculated to entitle the decision to respect. How do our adversaries proceed? They do not even profess to argue the case with us. They set up a cry of fraud, robbery, pillage, plunder; but, not an argument do they produce to substantiate the charges which they bring against us, while, as you will by-and-by see, they, by their own confessions, furnish arguments sufficiently conclusive against themselves.

We might, upon every fair principle of discussion, wait for their arguments when they shall find them, in answer to us; but this is what I shall not do. I made a proposition, which you did me the very great honour to adopt, and the way in which I shall show my sense of that honour, is to endeavour, by fair argument, to cover your adversaries with that shame and disgrace, which, without a shadow of proof they have dared to impute to you. I shall endeavour to show, Gentlemen, both the *justice* and the *necessity* of a reduction of the interest of the Debt. I shall not confine myself to a mere abstract view of the matter; and shall be willing to allow that, if the measure be not *expedient*; if it be not absolutely necessary to the safety of the country, it ought not to be adopted.

It is worthy of particular remark, before we go further, that this proposition is nothing new. The justice of reducing the interest of the Debt, has several times been stated in the House of Commons itself. Mr. Curwen, Mr. Lockhart, my Lord Folkestone (who was one of the Noblemen who signed the Requisition under which you met;) these and several others have stated the thing in the House. Lord Milton, in a circular letter, on the subject of agricultural distress, has declared that there can be no efficient relief without a reduction of the Debt. "*A Barrister*" has written a pamphlet published by Mr. Ridgway to prove that the full

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payment of the interest of the Debt is not binding according to any principles of *law*. The Rev. Richard Cruttwell, a Rector of the Church of England, has published several pamphlets at Mr. Hatchard's, bookseller of the late Queen of pious memory, and bookseller of Lord Liverpool and Mr. Wilberforce, in which Mr. Cruttwell insists on the justice and necessity of reducing the interest of the Debt. Nay, what was the motion of Mr. Western but for a very great reduction of that interest? Add to this, several petitions, presented to and received by the House of Commons, praying for such reduction; and particularly a Petition from the Hundred of Tapping in the County of Norfolk, not only praying for a reduction of the Debt, but for such a reduction as would bring down the taxes as nearly as possible to what they were in the year 1792, according to which these petitioners must have meant to take full two-thirds from the interest of the Debt.

How comes it that this petition did not call forth any of that talk and of these reproaches which have been bestowed upon your petition? This petition from the Hundred of Tapping was received without a single comment; and there it now stands quietly on the Journals of the House. Lord Castlereagh did not discover the same reason for receiving and printing that that he discovered for receiving and printing yours. He did not discover that it was good to receive it and print it as a *warning*, to other Hundreds and other Counties to take care how they "*covered themselves with disgrace.*" The truth is, that the petitioners of Tapping only spoke the thoughts of a very great majority of the people of this kingdom; and that Lord Castlereagh knew very well; but he also knew that the petitioners of Tapping were a quiet unperceived body; that their petition and proceedings were things little heard of except in their own neighbourhood; that no report respecting them found

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its way into the newspapers; that their petition was an air-gun; whereas yours was a barrel of great report, rattling through the whole cover and setting every animal in motion. This accounts for the difference in the treatment of these two petitions; and it ought to make you quite satisfied with your conduct at Maidstone; which you may be well assured will be an *example* and not a *warning* to the nation.

To return to the divers instances above-mentioned, which show that this proposition of yours was no novelty; I could add greatly to the number of *authorities;* but, it becomes us to take shelter under authorities of no description whatever. I have merely mentioned these authorities, to show the great and glaring inconsistency and total senselessness of our adversaries upon this occasion; but shall not content myself with resting upon authorities in any the smallest degree. If the justice of the proposition cannot be made manifest by argument, abandon it, I pray you; rescind it, whenever Mr. Calcraft shall call upon you for that purpose in county meeting. But, if on argument its justice stand, there uphold it in spite of all the noise and nonsense that hypocrites can suggest and fools bellow forth.

In order to show the justice of the proposition, we ought, first, to get, if we can, at something like a clear idea of the thing called the National Debt. That mixture of knavery and folly which make up the stock-jobbing mind, would fain have us believe, that the National Debt resembles, in all respects, a debt due from one man to another for value received. This idea is very industriously inculcated, partly because it is familiar to every mind, and partly because it tends to deceive, and to perpetuate the commission of fraud. The dissimilarity between public debts and private debts would be manifest enough, if we were but to look at the motives by which men rely for security in the two cases. But, if we were

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to adopt their notion of similarity, even that would fail them. For, what can the private creditor do to his debtor? He can only go *so far*, and no farther in the way of exacting his due. He can, indeed, take from the debtor his property; but he cannot take from him the future use of his limbs or his mind. He is compelled to leave him, after all, much the better part of his possessions; whereas these public creditors as they call themselves, would take from the nation at large its very means of existing in community such as it has heretofore existed. They would take from the nation the means of internal peace, and of providing, in peace, for war. They would leave it exposed in the hour of danger, not only to invasion but to subjugation. They would overturn every thing. They would destroy the very faculties of the nation; and this is what the private creditor is by no means permitted to do with regard to his debtor.

When one party makes a demand upon another party for the payment of any thing, there is not only the sum to be ascertained; but, if necessary, the origin of the debt and the nature of the contract. If it could be proved or pretended that each person who calls himself a creditor of the nation had actually brought the sum which he pretends is due to him; had actually brought it, in good and lawful money, and put it into the hands of the Government; if there were only the slightest pretence for asserting this, then I should say, that it was a question of more difficulty; then I should say, that this thing called "Funded Property" stands somewhat nearly upon a level with property in house and land. But, is it not notorious, that the thing called a *Loan* has never, and particularly of late years, borne the slightest resemblance to a transaction of this sort. Look at the thing in gross. There are *eight hundred millions of money*, due, they say, to the fundholders, and for this we are paying them interest. Has

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all this money been lent to the Government? To be lent, it must be possessed. Eight hundred millions of money is twice as much, at this moment, as all the lands, houses, woods and waters in the King's European dominions would sell for if they were put up at auction. Where, then, did this money *come from?* Can any one but an ideot believe that so much money was ever brought and delivered to the Government?

A loan was not the bringing of money to the Government: it was the writing of a name that constituted the loan in the first instance. Then came a shuffling about of the paper-money; and after the bonuses, discounts and allowances of one kind and another, the thing amounted to little more than the lending of the gains arising from the various workings of the thing. I have once before described this matter; but I repeat, that it was common to let newspaper editors and clerks in offices have what was called a *slice of a loan.* I was asked just after my first return from America, by persons very conversant with the matter, why I, as a loyal writer, did not ask for a slice of the loan. Now, what money had I to lend to the Government? Yet, I should certainly *have got* some money by this slice; and, out of whose pockets was the money finally to come? It is recorded in the laws; in the Acts of Parliament, that the heaven-born minister, Pitt, lent the loan-contractors, Boyd and Benfield (who were Members of Parliament at the same time,) a sum of the public money, to enable them to make good an instalment upon a loan made by them to that very public; that he lent them this money without interest, while the public was paying them or paying the scrip-holders interest for the whole of the loan, this part of it as well as the rest! This transaction came out by accidental detection, many years after it took place; and, Act 78 of the 45th year of the reign of the late King was an Act to indemnify Pitt that is to say, to *screen* and *protect*

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him for having unlawfully lent the public money to loan-makers without interest while the nation was charged with interest upon this very sum. At the same time it was discovered, and by accident also, that when the "loyalty loan" was raised, ten thousand pounds of it was lent by Dundas out of the nation's own money, deposited in his hands as Treasurer of the Navy. These facts are notorious; they are upon record on the Journals of the House of Commons itself; and if these things could take place and could come to light almost by miracle, what are we to suppose was going on throughout the whole of the period of the last thirty years of borrowing, while, pray bear in mind, twelve hundred millions of money were actually raised upon us in taxes?

When we take the magnitude of the sum pretended to be now due into view, we must be convinced that there is no source from whence it can have come except that of the taxes themselves; and this is the source and the only source. Bonusses, discounts, allowances, charges of management, and the rollings over of interest, which made the Government borrow, in fact, the nation's own money over and over again; these account; and nothing else can account, for the nation having had lent to it what they call eight hundred millions of money, while the fee-simple of its soil is not worth half the sum. I put the case as I put it once before; if a mere common shopkeeper were to go into a court and swear that he had lent his rich neighbour half a million of money, would not a jury decide at once that the demand was unjust and ascribe it to madness? And is the demand of eight hundred millions of money; is the demand of a sum double in amount to the worth of the fee-simple of the land; is *such* a demand, on the part of *any* body, to be seriously listened to and reasoned about? However, bearing in mind this real character of the thing, let us, for argument's sake (and merely for argument's sake)

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suppose all the money to have been really brought and *put down to the Government*. This is what no man in his senses *can* believe, and it is what none but a knave will *pretend* to believe: but, merely for the sake of argument; for the sake of coming fairly at our opponents and grappling with them in their own way, let us suppose it to be so. The object of our enquiry, in this narrow view of the matter, is, whether the Jews do not *now receive a larger interest than they ought to receive?*

It is perfectly well known that the prices of the produce of the land are not now more than a third of what they were for many years before 1815, during which years the greater part of the debt was contracted. It is usual to admit that the depreciation of the money began with the Bank-stoppage in the year 1797; but it began, in fact, in the year 1793. Now, then, taking it in round numbers, two hundred millions of the debt were contracted before 1793, and six hundred millions between that year and the year 1815. If you take two-and-twenty years before the depreciation began, and see the price of wheat during that period, and then take two-and-twenty years after the depreciation began, you will find that the price of wheat during that period was much higher, more than double what it was during the former period; and you will also find that the price of wheat now is come down to what it was during the latter part, at any rate, of that former period. During the first period, those who lent money to the Government, supposing, for argument's sake, that it was a real lending of money, lent it the worth of *four bushels and a half of wheat*, or thereabouts, under the name of a pound. Those who lent it money, during the second period, lent it about *a bushel and three quarters* of wheat under the name of a pound. If any persons had to lend it money now, they would have to lend it about *four bushels and a quarter* of wheat under the name

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of a pound. Consequently, if we had to *pay off* the Jews, and if the Government were to insist upon our paying off in the present money, we should have to give those who lent the six hundred millions *four bushels and a quarter of wheat* for every *bushel and three quarters* that they lent! And, this is what they call *national faith* and *national honour!* This is the monstrous iniquity, for protesting against which; for endeavouring to procure a mitigation of which, your own Member, and I might say your own *members*, have had the confidence to charge you with incurring the just reprobation of all honest men!

Those who lent their money before the year 1793; these it will be said, stand on a *different footing* from the others. In the first place, I should be disposed to question their claim to any preference at all; because I found a dispute on the very nature of the transaction; but I have conceded that for the sake of argument; and according to this concession, I should say, that if those who lent their money previous to 1793, could be *ascertained;* if they could be distinguished from the others; if the others had not long ago bought them out with depreciated money; if the transmutation were not necessarily almost as complete as that of hay and oats when turned into manure; if this were not the case, I should say that a distinction ought to be made; that the payment ought to be in proportion to the worth of the thing lent; and that the man who lent *four bushels and a half* of wheat, ought to receive a great deal more in payment than a man that lent only a *bushel and three quarters.* And so you say, too, for you pray for a *just* reduction of the National Debt; and not an indiscriminating, which would manifestly be an *unjust* reduction. But, if it be just to pay the lenders of the six hundred millions at the present rate; if it be just to pay those *four bushels and a quarter* of wheat that lent but *one bushel and three quarters*, what mon-

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strous injustice is it to yield no more than the same payment to those that lent the four bushels and a half; and then, again, if we are only acting honestly now, in giving *four bushels and a quarter* in payment for a *bushel and three quarters*, let the world be astounded at our roguery in paying, as we did, in a bushel and three quarters from 1798 to 1814!

Thus, then, even supposing the lending of the money to have been a real lending; even leaving out of view all the possible transactions like those of Boyd and Benfield with Pitt and of Dundas; even supposing eight hundred millions of money to have been really bought and paid down to the Government: it is clear that the lenders of the six hundred millions have an equitable claim to no more than a bushel and three quarters of wheat instead of the four bushels and a quarter that they now receive. We are told that they have *law* for it; and that it was a *bargain* made with them. And these words *law* and *bargain* and *sacred contract* and *good faith* and *national honour* and the like, are rung upon as ringers ring changes upon bells. But, to come to plain common sense and sincerity, was a bargain ever made with these people to give them four bushels and a quarter of wheat for a bushel and three quarters? If it were so, why do they not, as *Mr. Lockhart* says, show us the Act of Parliament for it? And even then, as to their having *law* for it, there are many laws about many things; but we know well, that nothing in the shape of law may not be altered or repealed. We have seen laws enough, and of much more ancient standing than these laws about the Debt, and about ten million times more sacred, not only suspended but set aside; but these laws about the Jews are, they would have us believe, like those of the Medes and Persians, which change not. You do not propose by your Petition that any thing should be done *without law;* on the contrary you *pray for a law,*

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and these are people to call you robbers and plunderers because you want a law to prevent you from giving any longer four bushels and a quarter of wheat for a bushel and three quarters; and to prevent the labouring man's child in the cradle from having more than half its labour mortgaged to Jews and jobbers.

We have seen that the transmutation of the claims of those, who lent their money before 1793, must have been such as to have thrown ninety-nine hundredths of any loss, that might have been sustained by the fundholders, upon persons who are not now fundholders; but, besides this, there is one thing, common to every class of the fund-tribe, which all the calculators of claims seem to overlook. They seem to forget that upwards of three hundred millions have already been paid to the fundholders under the name of Sinking Fund. This thing, which has been a complete humbug with regard to the nation, has been something perfectly solid as to the Jews. It has been an enormous sum of money raised yearly in taxes to be carried to 'Change Alley and there to be laid out in *weekly* sums in order to make the stock of the fundholders *constantly saleable at a good price.* What is this but so much money paid them over and above their interest? What would people think of raising ten or fifteen millions of taxes in a year to be laid out in the purchasing up of house and land? Why, they would say what was said the other day about the corn-pawning project, and that was, that it was just so much of the public money intended to be given to the landlords and farmers, only with this difference, that the corn-pawning project would not have been half so advantageous to the landlords and farmers as the Sinking Fund has been to the fundholders. Suppose (and, indeed, they often assert it), that these Jews have a *mortgage* upon the land. It is a comfortable reflection for a landlord, to be sure; especially if their

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tenure be, as Lord Castlereagh asserts it to be, as good as that of the Duke of Bedford to his estate: but, suppose them to have this mortgage at five per cent. have they a right to any more? Have they a right to have three hundred millions laid out in purchasing up their mortgages, in order to give them double security? If they have the mortgage, these three hundred thousand pounds have been paid off; they have got these, at any rate; and in common justice, even according to their own impudent demands of four bushels and a quarter instead of a bushel and three quarters; even according to this impudent account they have but five hundred millions due to them. An account more impudent certainly never was brought to lord by London tradesman who spends his Sunday morning (after prayers) in turning the noughts of his bill into sixes and into nines. Let it be a mortgage, since Lord Castlereagh will have it so; but let him then, find us, in the history of the whole world, a fund raised out of the taxes of any country, to provide for mortgagees a constant mart whereon to dispose of their mortgages.

These, therefore, are three hundred millions already paid to the fundholders, over and above their interest. Now, according to their own showing; according to Mr. Muschett's showing; according to the Edinburgh Reviewers; taking the transaction to have been an honest transaction from the beginning; even in this view of the matter and on their own showing, taking in the pretended losses of the old fundholder, and taking, too, the standard of Mr. Ricardo in place of the standard of the bushels of wheat; making all these allowances and admissions, they themselves say, that, up to this time, setting one thing against another (leaving out the three hundred millions, mind,) and then, up to this time, they say that the account is pretty fairly balanced, and, that which the fundholder has recently

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gained being set against what he lost before, things are much about what they ought to be. It would be lucky, indeed, if such a blundering government produced no mischief; if chopping and changing the value of money produced no mischief, it would be a wonderful spectacle for the world to behold. However, if the account be fairly balanced *up to this day*, your prayer comes in precisely the nick of time; for it is not mad enough to refer to the past; and only asks protection for the future. It is monstrously false to say that the fundholders have not been overpaid up to this day; but of that you say nothing: you only want to be protected for the future; and is there any man hardy enough to tell you that because you have been paying four bushels and a quarter of wheat for one and three quarters for some time, you are to continue to do that *for ever*, and that, too, at the same time that he allows that up to this day the account is fairly settled? There might be some reason for saying, *hitherto*, that the nation ought to pay four bushels and a quarter of wheat for one bushel and three quarters, on account of the one and three quarters which it paid to certain fundholders for some years, instead of four bushels and a half. It is a pretty way of doing *justice*, to be sure, to pay those who lent the six hundred millions three times as much as is their due, because those who lent the two hundred millions received less than their due: this gives us a pretty neat idea of what *national faith* and *national honour* mean. But, at any rate, our censurers themselves agree, that up to this day, justice has been done. What reason could there be, then, for continuing to pay the four bushels and a quarter for a bushel and three quarters; and, which is the robber, which is the plunderer, which is guilty of breach of faith, he who prays to be relieved from paying four bushels and a quarter for one bushel and three quarters; or he who wishes to hold him to

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the letter of the law and squeeze from him the last drop of his blood; he who stands with his bond in one hand and the sharp knife in the other, the water from his mouth moistening his beard, ready to make the incision and take the pound of flesh? Even Mr. Ricardo, in answer to Sir Francis Burdett, said, that, upon the whole, it was a question with him whether the fundholder had gained or lost. But if this was a question with him, can it be a question with any honest man, whether the fundholder ought to continue to gain for ever? And whether the children's children of Englishmen ought to toil like slaves and live on the crusts that fall from the table of these pampered Israelites, or Israelitish Christians?

Your Petition prays that this injustice may be put an end to; and in praying for that you pray for the preservation of your country as well as for yourselves and families. It is clear that, without this reduction, the very least evil that could happen is a total change of society in England. It is clear that there must be a breaking up of the present race of farmers; that a breaking up of the present race of landlords will speedily follow; and that, at last, a convulsion of some sort or other must come. Some of the stupid men in London have drawn out their forces; have said that the fundholders are more numerous than those connected with the land. They forget that the whole nation are connected with the land. They forget that all the landlords, all the farmers, all the traders, artisans and labourers have the foundation of their prosperity in the land and no where else. The debt is a night-mare that is pressing down the dreaming nation, which has only to give a fling, and the evil is removed; and to you, Men of Kent, the nation will be indebted for having begun to give this fling.

It is curious to observe the predicament in which the most noisy of our censurers have placed them-

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selves. At the Meeting, Sir E. Knatchbull (without being called upon for it), *before any proposition was made*, you will observe; before that, which is very material to observe; before he could have had any suspicion of such a proposition being made, he must needs talk about the National Debt, and tell you that we ought to pay to the *last extremity*. Now, what could have induced him to do this? Nobody asked him for it. How came he to think of it? Did you ever hear a man who owed money, and who had not the smallest thought about not paying it, did you ever hear such a man come out with an uncalled for declaration that he would pay to the last extremity? If you were to meet a banker in the street, and he were to tell you, without any question being put to him by you, that he was resolved to pay to the last extremity, should you not begin to feel in your pockets to find if you had got any of his notes? And if you had any, should you not leave him standing in the street and run away to get them changed, for fear the last extremity should come before you get them there? Words are merely thoughts put into sounds; and there must have been some thought about *not paying* the full amount of the Debt passing in Sir Edward Knatchbull's mind; he must have thought something about *an end* to the payment, before he talked of the *last extremity*. In the House itself they have got "*overwhelming necessity*." Now, according to my opinion, the overwhelming necessity is come. There are divers stages in every evil; but we are not to stop till the evil is arrived at its last stage before we apply a remedy. We are not to stop here in England till people shall be dying in the streets and on the highway from starvation; for, let it be observed, there will be no sister-kingdom to relieve us. If, owing to this debt, only one single farmer and his family be brought to the parish, that alone constitutes, in my view of the

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matter, the overwhelming necessity. We stop a flood, if we stop it at all, at its commencement; when it has overflowed us we have no power, and we are destroyed. If we mean to rescue ourselves from insupportable pressure, we must not stop till we are overwhelmed and crushed; but must make use of our power to turn aside the weight while we are able. The "education of the country," therefore, which talks about stopping to pay when the "overwhelming necessity" shall have arrived, talks nonsense. There is no meaning in the words; but, we discover, through the whole of this censure from our opponents, a thorough conviction at the bottom of their hearts, that the day must come, and that that day is not distant, when a considerable part of this debt can no longer be paid. Not a word did they say against the Petition of the *Hundred of Tapping* in Norfolk. The same sentiments have been expressed upon many former occasions, without calling forth any censure at all: and therefore I pray you be not discouraged by the vehemence of the censure bestowed upon you. It will not be the first time if this vehement censure should lead, and speedily too, to the adoption of the very thing which has been the subject of the censure.

We have been accused of *desperate* notions. Pray was it a desperate notion that induced Mr. Ricardo to propose to *seize on the land* in order to pay off the Debt? This was modest, I suppose. And the gentleman was quite calm when he made the proposition. To my utter astonishment the landlords heard that proposition without resenting it; and yet, one of your Members has found brass sufficient to accuse you of adopting a dishonest proposition because you would step in and prevent the execution of projects like this. He does not pretend; and none of them pretend that the interest of the debt can continue to be paid for ever. They all of them contemplate a state of things

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that may put a total stop to the payment. Lord John Russell, being hard pressed, supposed the case of war and invasion. Why should these justify a cessation of the payment of the interest, if the ruin of farmers and traders and the starvation of labourers are not sufficient to justify it. Are war and invasion and even conquest worse than general beggary and starvation! I should like to hear the answer that Lord John would get from a farmer to whom he should say: "the debt *will* make "you a beggar without war, inva-"sion and conquest; war, invasion "and conquest *may* make you a "beggar:" which would you like best! The answer is upon the lips of every man that shall do me the honour to read this paper. For, where is the man, except he be a born idiot, that will not prefer the mere chance to the certainty of ruin. This leads us to another and larger and more terrific view of the consequences of this all-corrupting, all-corroding, all-crippling and all-ruining debt. Well have the petitioners of the Hundred of Tapping in Norfolk called it a millstone dragging down the British nation; for, it is dragging us down, and down we are going at a greater rate than nation ever yet fell! Are we secure from the hostility of our neighbours? Yet it may now be said of England, that she dare not think of war; that she dare not even to be providing against it, while her enemies are growing to gigantic strength. Will any one say that additional taxes can be laid on to the amount of even one million a-year; much less to the amount of thirty or forty millions a-year, which a war would require. A war with America and France would see these Islands invaded in two months, without forty millions a-year expenditure in addition to the present. And is there any man mad enough to suppose that those forty millions could be raised in taxes in addition to the present taxes, and with present prices? Would the Government borrow again? Would

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make another string of loans? Would it get those loans in gold? Would it come back again to the paper and to high prices? Would they make another debt of eight hundred millions? And would they, at the conclusion of such war, again return to cash-payments, pass another Peel's Bill, and raise a hundred and thirty millions a year in gold, with wheat at four or five shillings a bushel?

Barely to ask these questions seriously would savour of a cracked brain; and, yet, there are men to talk, like Mr. John Smith, of paying the interest of this Debt in gold to the full amount, and not to admit the possibility of coming to pay; nay, and to deem it disgraceful in you, that you do not concur in the frantic doctrine. One of the best means of obviating war is to take care to be in a state that makes you not fear it. To see you ready for war is always the surest means of producing temper, prudence and patience in the adversary. Thus prepared; standing in an attitude like this, you come to every negociation of every sort, with advantages far superior to all those with which you can be furnished by craft and by eloquence. Your adversary looks at his arms, and, having measured him from head to foot, he acts accordingly. No nation fears England at the present moment; and, in every contest that we have had, in every dispute about navigation and commerce, this Debt has been a millstone about our necks; a millstone visible to all the world; a tremendous weight in the scale in favour of every one that has had a dispute with us of any description. This has been the cause of the present projects for abrogating, in part, at least, those Navigation Laws; that system of maritime management and jurisdiction which first gave us the preponderance against France. The Bills at this moment in the House of Lords, and which are about to pass into laws, are the result of vain attempts to obtain profitable commerce by negociation. We

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want the money obtainable from commerce; but that very want deprives us of the power of getting the commerce. Often has it been asked why we have no commercial treaty with France; why the Dutch overreach us; why the Americans take possession of the Gulf of Mexico; and actually take a step upon the West India Islands, while our Government seem stricken dumb! The answer is found in THE DEBT. It is written in a figure of eight and eight ciphers and posted up in Change Alley, and there it tells the King of England: "Dare "never to talk of war again as "long as I am in existence!"

It is unpleasant, it is painful in the extreme, to have to perform the duty of foreboding the downfall of one's own country; and if painful to the rest of mankind, what must it be to an Englishman, who always feels for his country, even when he does not feel for himself! Yet, this is a duty to be performed, and is imperious in proportion to the mind's conviction of the fact. My wishes can avail nothing; but my sincere opinion is, that if your prayer be not heard; if the interest of this Debt be not reduced, this Nation is doomed to become one of the most contemptible upon the face of the earth. The American statesmen, I know, regard our Debt as their best security. They rejoice at its existence; and at the obstinacy of our Government in adhering to the system they have so long pursued. In France, I question not, the same sentiments prevail. But, those nations disentangled themselves from their Debts. They both took care to get rid of the crippling load; and while we are adhering to the enfeebling curse, they are growing strong by the migration to their shores of the capital, the industry and the genius of Englishmen. Great has already been this migration; but it is nothing to what we have yet to behold. Men will not remain to be crushed into the earth for the sake of Jews and Jobbers and to leave to their chil-

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dren beggary and slavery as a legacy. You, Gentlemen, have done your duty: I trust your example will have an effect on others; if it have, it will rescue the country from ruin and degradation unparalleled in the history of the world, and gratitude will record that for this great benefit the nation is indebted to the County of Kent. With the greatest respect and esteem,

I am, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient

humble Servant,

WM. COBBETT.

THE above Letter will be published next Saturday in a small pamphlet, which will be sold for *Three-pence*. It is very desirable that it should be circulated widely; that it should be got into all parts of the country and well read and digested; that it should be read by all the farmers more especially, and that, too, without delay. It will therefore, for the purpose of circulation, be sold as follows:

For a thousand, 5*l.*

For five hundred, 3*l.*

For two hundred and seventy, 2*l.*

For a hundred and twenty-five, 1*l.*

Gentlemen in the country will obtain any number sent to them, carriage free, by writing to the Office of the Register, No. 183, Fleet-street, London.

THE following Letter, which was published in the Statesman London Evening Newspaper, contains some facts and remarks which it is proper should be inserted in this place. I have not, in the above Letter, mixed any of the personalities drawn forth by the unworthy conduct of the parties, because I wished the subject to stand on its intrinsic merits; but, the following Letter is nevertheless not unnecessary.—

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I take this occasion of observing that the far greater part of the London Newspapers, not to say the whole of them, are wedded to, and bedded with, the Jews of Change Alley; that, as far as they circulate in the country they must do mischief to the cause of truth and of honourable dealing; and that, therefore, it is the duty of every man to narrow, as much as he can, the circulation of those papers and to encourage that of papers of a different description. I do not say this from any jobbing, rascally, money-changing motive; and if any other London paper will take the same side and show the same zeal as the Statesman, I will be the first man to express my gratitude to that paper, and to recommend it to the attention of my readers. I denounce the Morning Chronicle as being the tool of the school of Ricardo. The Courier is the slave of the Ministers, and so is the New Times. The Old Times is the slave of the Devil and the Jews, and whatever they command it will write, though it be to swear that Herod was a merciful governor, Pontius Pilate a just judge, and Judas a faithful disciple.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT.

To the Freeholders of the County of Kent.

Kensington, June 18, 1822.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Petition, which you agreed on, at Maidstone, last Tuesday, was presented last night, to the House of Commons; and I am now about to address you on the debate, which arose out of it, and particularly out of the *addition*, which I had the honour to propose for your adoption, and which you had the honesty, the sincerity and *good faith* to adopt. This addition, it will be recollected, was in the following words:—

"And your Petitioners, further, "most humbly pray, that your Hu- "nourable House will be pleased "to cause a just reduction of the "National Debt, as soon as you "shall have completed a Reform "of your Honourable House."

This debate is of the very first importance to the country. In such a case, it is very difficult for the reporters of newspapers to

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give any thing like a full account of what passes. The debate occupied nearly about four hours; and that which is inserted in the newspapers, as the report of it, does not take above a quarter of an hour in the reading. Consequently, we have but a mere sketch of it in print. On Monday, there will be inserted in THE STATESMAN as full a report as can be made out from the materials already in print and from the memory of a Gentleman who was present at the debate. You will observe, too, that the hireling part of the press, which makes up a considerable portion of it, has given the thing in as disadvantageous a way as possible towards us; that being the wish of the caballing factions that hire it and pay it, and which factions now seem to be frightened at the apparent return of good sense to the country.

This being the case, you are not to look at the report of the debate which you will find in this paper, and which report is, as usual with evening papers, made up from the morning papers; you are not to look upon this as a full report by any means; and, therefore, you will not make up your minds entirely as to some parts of it, till you see the fullest report that can be obtained. In the meanwhile, it is my duty to offer you some remarks upon it; first, as to my conduct and that of the Meeting; and next, as to the merits of the case itself. In another and longer Address to you, which I shall publish in my *Register* of Saturday next, I intend to show, for about the thousandth time, the justice and the necessity of reducing the interest of the Debt. On the present occasion, therefore, I shall confine myself, as far as relates to this matter, to a few remarks on the miserable arguments (if such they ought to be called) that have been made use of in opposition to that part of the Petition of which I have above spoken.

As to the conduct of myself and of the Meeting.—Sir EDWARD KNATCHBULL observed that my character, as well as my conduct, was worthy of the reprobation of every honest man. He called me "*Cobbett*", and, in one paper, it is said that he supposed he must *call me a Gentleman*, as I called myself a freeholder of Kent. KNATCHBULL calls himself a Gentleman, I suppose, and, if that be the case, the only favour I have to beg of him is, that he will not call me one.—He says that Lord DARNLEY, no

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doubt, considered my character and conduct as worthy the reprobation of every honest man. I have no doubt, that this is not true; because, if you were to believe this, you must believe, that which is not to be believed, namely, that Lord Darnley is both a coward and a hypocrite; for you all heard him call me, not only a Gentleman, but an "Honourable Gentleman;" and I trust, that his Lordship never has seen, and never will see, any thing in my character or conduct to render the words inapplicable.

But, if the proposition was of that flagitious nature which Knatchbull ascribes to it; if my character and conduct were such as he describes them, what a situation does he place himself in. There was he, in his own county, a cock upon his own dunghill, surrounded by scores of staunch adherents; and there was I, without having a personal knowledge of any six men in the county, offering to a County Meeting, a proposition which he thought so infamous; and yet he remained as silent as a mouse as to the *merits* of that proposition, saying nothing about it, from first to last except as to the mode in which it should be put by the Sheriff to the Meeting. There was I, standing opposite him; he knew (or else what he now says is not true) that I was a person of justly reprobated character and conduct; he hears me make a proposition to the Meeting; he sees the Meeting adopt that proposition; he is in the midst of his constituents; and not *one single word does he say about that character or conduct.* But, Gentlemen, that would have been saying it to my *face*, and Knatchbull thought it more manly to suppress what he thought there, and to say it in the House of Commons, where he knew I should not be! If this is being a *Gentleman*, I hereby give Knatchbull notice, that if he ever call me one, I shall consider it a personal insult.

So much for him, and now to Lord Calthorpe, who said that it *was impossible to tell* how it was that Mr. Cobbett had obtained "an influence over the Meeting "so as to succeed with his pro- "position." As his Lordship seems desirous to be let into a secret here; and as I scorn all disguise, he shall have the secret. In the first place, I was an utter stranger, except to about six persons; in the next place, I spoke not to a single soul before the Meeting with respect to my

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intentions; in the next place, I asked nobody to second my proposition. What then, was this influence? It was the influence of a conviction in the minds of the Landlords who were not tax-eaters; of the yeomen, of the renting farmers, of the tradesmen, and even of the few labourers that were present, that, without a reduction of the interest of the National Debt, they must continue to suffer until they be totally ruined and brought to beggary.—This was the influence. The thoughts and wishes of the Meeting were put into words by me, and no merit do I claim for so doing; for that which is thought by every man, any man may easily express. Mr. BROUGHAM calls the proposition *crude*. The proposition was not, to be sure, as long as a declaration or a Bill in Chancery; but, if I am to judge from written Resolutions and other documents of the kind that have come from under his hand, he is not a man that would have been likely to propose any thing better digested, though I had not the opportunity of committing it to writing, and though it was not committed to writing, till one gentleman wrote it on a piece of paper which he held on the back of another gentleman, after I had several times repeated it to the Meeting.

One material thing, of which HATCHELL, Mr. HONYWOOD, and LORD CLIFTON say not a word, was this, that the proposition did not stand upon my recommendation alone. Having been opposed by Lord DARNLEY, it was supported, and most ably supported, by Mr. LAWKIN, with whom, let it be observed, too, I had had no opportunity of conferring, and to whom I was *an utter stranger*. Mr. HONYWOOD said in the debate, that he *disapproved* of the proposition, and that he *opposed* it at the time. He must have done this in a very quiet manner; for not one man in the Meeting heard him utter one word upon the subject. Candour, however, ought to have induced him to state that Mr. FOOTE, the mover of the original Petition, actually rose and *moved* that my proposition should be a part of that Petition; that Mr. DARRELL, Jun. rose to second that motion; that Mr. RIDER, who had seconded the original Petition, also rose and seconded this motion of Mr. FOOTE; and you know well, Gentlemen, that these three Gentlemen were all in the *same waggon with* Mr. HONYWOOD, standing in company with him, he

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being, in fact, one of their supporters during the day.

Mr. CALCRAFT says, that the Meeting could not have been taken by surprise; that the Members of the County were very much to blame; that if HE had been there, he should, with very little trouble, have given such a turn to the matter, as to cause the mover of the proposition to be desired by the Freeholders present, to "Take his horse and make the best of his way home." JOHN CALCRAFT, thou art what I have always known thee to be; and, thou Representative of the free and independent electors of Wareham, and thou late Clerk of the Ordnance, I hereby tell thee that (to drop the Quaker style), if you will call a County Meeting in Kent and put to that Meeting a resolution to rescind this that you call so wicked a proposition, I will meet you there *face to face*, and my real opinion is, that it is you who would have to take your horse and make the best of your way home, having only to take care that your face was towards the head, and not towards the tail, of the horse.

Now, Gentlemen, as to your conduct at this Meeting, what could be more fair, what more worthy of Englishmen? You will recollect, that neither KNATCHBULL nor Lord DARNLEY pretended that the interest of the debt was *always* to be paid. They talked about paying as long as they could, and about ceasing to pay at a last extremity.—Even now, during this debate, none of them pretend, except the banker, JOHN SMITH, of Carrington fame and nobility; nobody else pretends that there may not arise a case such as will compel the country to cease to pay. Nay, the prime Minister himself, said, not many months ago, in the House of Lords, that, *if* a reduction were to be made in the interest of the debt, it ought to be done openly and avowedly, and not by corrupt and fraudulent means such as that of changing the standard of value. So that, there is no man, except such men as JOHN SMITH, that pretends, that even so much as pretends, that the full interest of the debt can always be paid; and yet they pretend to look upon your conduct as foolish in adopting the proposition! The question is, and this is the only question appertaining to this part of the subject, Is there a necessity for a reduction or is there not? It is agreed on all hands that an overwhelming necessity may come, and the question is, as Mr. WEST-

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man fairly stated it, has this necessity arrived or has it not. What is *overwhelming*? What does that mean, as here applied? It means, covering with ruin. It is very true that those who live directly or indirectly on the taxes are not covered with ruin; but covered with the spoils of the rest of the community. It is very true that the Borough-men, whose families and dependents of all sorts are doing so well, are not covered with ruin; but if the landlords who do not live on taxes; if the yeomen, if the farmers, if the tradesmen, and the labourers of this country be not covered with ruin; then this whole nation, Irish as well as British, ought to be destroyed by fire and brimstone; for such a swarm of liars never before existed upon the face of the earth. However, they are not liars. They are covered with ruin; and unless the interest of the debt be reduced, the whole of the present race of persons of property must be reduced to beggary.

Never was, as you well know, so miserable an attempt as that which has been made to make the country believe that you were taken by surprise in this instance, and that exertion on the part of the Whig Lords would have induced you to reject the proposition. Lord CLIFTON was "prepared to admit that there was a "culpable want of spirit on the "part of the leaders." He complains of an unfavourable position that he was in at the Meeting. If his Lordship speak of bodily position, and, if he was inconveniently situated on the Sheriff's platform, surrounded by Noble and Reverend friends, and with a handrail before him, and standing in the front of the company, how unfavourable must my position have been; pressed half to a jelly in a wagon, and so closely pressed as being able with great difficulty to move hand or foot, or to stand upright. Neither does his Lordship do justice to his own father, who not only opposed the proposition, and in two speeches, too, but who said every thing upon the subject that has now been said in the House of Commons. What spirit, therefore; what want of spirit was there in the leaders? Lord CLIFTON himself spoke; but, like KNATCHBULL, only as to the manner of putting the question by the Sheriff. The fact is that his Lordship perceived the conviction of the Meeting to be such; their good sense and their *spirit* to be such, as to render all opposition hopeless.

Another circumstance of great

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importance has been wholly omitted, namely, that, when I first offered myself to the Meeting, which I did not do till every body else had finished, there were some cries, and, perhaps, from scores of voices, of "*off, off.*" Now, the persons who cried "*off*," still made part of the Meeting when the proposition was put; and this it is very material to bear in mind; for even these persons, who doubtless dislike me very much, and who would be ready to step a little out of the way to give me mortification; or, at least, to prevent me from obtaining so very great an honour as that which I must manifestly derive from an unanimous vote in favour of my motion; even *these* persons voted for that very motion, coming from a man that they so much disliked, and to prevent whom from opening his mouth, they had just before made such zealous efforts.

Therefore, Gentlemen, let shufflers say what they will; let men who are blind, and who wish to continue blind, say or think what they will. This was the deliberate decision of the County of Kent. There were Noblemen, Gentlemen, Clergy and Freeholders; and though there were few of the real labouring class present, there appeared to be about half a dozen journeymen in flannel jackets and paper caps, who were very good representatives of the whole of that class. 'Tis never mentioned, in the Honourable House, that the question was twice put to the Meeting, in consequence of a misunderstanding, which KNATCHBULL perceived, or pretended to perceive, to exist. This is never mentioned; much less is it mentioned that the first time there were only *six* hands held up against the proposition, and the second time only *three*. If it had been put a third time, there would not have been one.

I have no time, Gentlemen, at present, to enter further into the subject. You have the satisfaction to know that you have given an example to the country. I claim no merit in the little that I did. The proposition was much more ably supported by Mr. LARKIN than by myself. I merely put into words that which was passing in your minds. The conduct of the Ministers, upon this occasion, has been any thing but bold. They receive the Petition, mind. The House orders it to be *printed*; and what is the reason which my Lord CASTLEREAGH gives for this? "That he is anxious to have it "*recorded* as an instance of the "feeling of Parliament upon this

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"subject, with a view to warn "other counties from disgracing "themselves, by adopting the like "recommendations to the House." This is certainly an Irish reason, my Lord; for you *record* the Petition, and you record nothing else. Your Journals will tell posterity that you receive this proposition. That you caused it to be printed and put upon your Journals, and as to the rubbishing publications called Debates, who cares a straw about them? This is a droll way of discouraging other counties from following your example, Gentlemen. Mr. PEEL said that he liked the "*plain-dealing*" of Mr. COBBETT, and Sir FRANCIS BURDETT, who, as well as Mr. WESTERN, spoke out honestly upon this occasion, said, that the Right Honourable Gentleman would have a great deal of that plain dealing, which he so much admired.

I shall conclude, for the present, by just noticing the paragraph called the speech of JOHN SMITH. He is reported to have said that you adopted a nefarious proposition; that it was a great mortification to him, that they who prided themselves on their integrity and honour to such a degree that they had a *peculiar title* on that account, should be the first body in the kingdom to Petition the House of Commons to *violate the public faith*, and commit the *grossest act of injustice*. You knew well that you petitioned for no such thing; but for a just reduction of the National Debt: you know that this charge against you is not true; and this debate ought to convince you that that which you did redounds greatly to your honour; that if you be the first to give this recommendation, you will be by no means the last; and it will convince the rest of the kingdom, that MEN OF KENT *is not* a mere empty name, but that, first in title, you are also first in honesty, sincerity and public spirit.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your faithful Friend and

Most obedient Servant,

WM. COBBETT.

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COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER,

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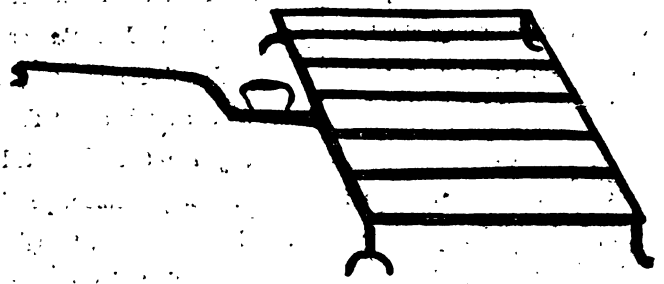

"This Bill (Mr. Peel's) was grounded on *concurrent Reports* of both "Houses; it was passed by *unanimous votes* of both Houses; it was, at the "close of the Session, a subject of high eulogium in the Speaker's Speech to "the Regent, and in the Regent's Speech to the two Houses: now, then, I, "William Cobbett, assert, that, to carry this Bill into effect is *impossible*; and "I say, that, if this Bill be carried into full effect, I will give Castlereagh "leave to lay me on a *Gridiron* and broil me alive, while Sidmouth may stir "the coals, and Canning stand by and laugh at my groans."—*Taken from Cobbett's Register, written at North Hempstead, Long Island, on the 24th of September, 1819, and published in England in November, 1819.*

To the MONEY-HOARDERS.

On the Measures now in Progress for partially repealing Peel's Bill.

Kensington, 26 June, 1822.

MY FRIENDS,

You now begin to know most feelingly, that you have acted the wise part. Every move that the THING is taking and has taken shows how very ticklish it finds its state to be. So many measures are adopted, and so many more are proposed and withdrawn, that it is hardly possible for any one who does not pay constant attention to the subject to be able to say, at any given moment, what *is law*, and what is not law, with regard to any thing whatever,

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and especially with regard to the money of the country. One thing, however, every man knows; and that is, that if he have a golden sovereign locked up in a chest, no law except such a law as would authorize persons to come in and break open the chest and take it away, can put such sovereign in danger; and you, I hope, for reasons before stated, and others to be stated now, have some millions of sovereigns in this enviable situation.

It is a state of *uncertainty*: it is when we know not what may happen next, that men ought to hoard real money. Such is our present state, as you will presently see; and if any man tell me, that by hoarding he loses the interest of his money, my answer is, that that is the price which he pays for his security.

There are now before Parliament a Bill or Bills, the object of which is to keep up prices by adding to, or preventing the further diminution of, the whole quantity of money now in circulation in the country. Before I say any thing on the *effect* of this measure, it is my business to describe, as nearly as I am able, the nature of the measure itself. Mr. BROUGHAM can speak rather more than five hours at a stretch about the *influence of the Crown* exerted by the means of placemen, pensioners and taxgatherers, though he knows well that the money for those placemen, pensioners and taxgatherers is voted by the House of Commons, and though he knows equally well that it is not the *Crown* that puts in the Members that vote away that money; Mr. BROUGHAM *can* talk rather better than five hours at a stretch upon this subject; but he can let a *small note* Bill and a *legal tender* Bill; he can let these pass to a second, and, perhaps, a third reading without saying a word about the matter. These measures; or, let them be taken as one, this measure which is to have an effect on the affairs of every man in the country, appears to be going on

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as quietly as if they were Bills merely to correct verbal errors and to prevent the misconstruing of laws already passed.

From this defective information on the subject I am able to state to you merely the substance of the measure, and that, too, only as I gather it from here and there a word let drop, and noticed in the shortest manner possible by the reporters. Yet, as you will see, the measure amounts to nothing short of a *partial repeal of Peel's Bill;* and it will be, as you will also see, a fulfilment of the prophecy placed at the head of this Register. You will remember, that, just before the opening of the present Session, I told you, that, during this Session, there would be a "*talk* about repealing "Peel's Bill, and also a talk "about reducing the interest of "the Debt. Neither (I said) "will take place this Session, "though both will be much talked "about. But, I think, the Ses- "sion *cannot pass over* without "some little tricking attempt to "blunt the effect of Peel's Bill. "There will be, I am fully per- "suaded, some attempt to keep "out the paper. Something or "other, God knows what, to pre- "vent, or to try to prevent, prices "from coming down to their na- "tural Gold level."

Now, then, what is the attempt at present making? The country Banks (and this observe is No. 1.) are by law forbidden to make any notes *under five pounds* after May 1824. This is *No.* 1.; but this No. 1. is only collaterally connected with Peel's Bill. The Bank, I mean the *Borough Bank*, and I call it so because it is indissolubly bound up with the Boroughs; the Borough Bank is by Peel's Bill to issue no notes under five pounds after the first of May 1823; that is to say, after ten months more have passed over our heads. This I call *No.* 2. of the measure; branch No. 2. of the measure now in progress. The notes of the Bank; the notes of the Borough Bank are now by law a *legal tender*. That is to

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say, the Borough Bank, the Scotch Banks, the Irish Bank, the Country Banks, and, in short, any man that owes money may compel persons to take Borough Bank-notes instead of gold and silver. Peel's Bill *puts an end to this legal tender.* And this is branch No. 3. of the measure in progress, as far as I understand that measure, and as far as I am able to understand it from the scanty materials furnished me relative to the important subject.

The Bill or Bills in progress will, if I understand them rightly, enable Country Banks to make small notes for eleven years to come; that is to say, for ever; and thus branch No. 1. is settled. Next they will enable the Borough Bank to issue small notes for the same number of years; that is to say, also, for ever. In the next place, these Bills will continue the law of legal tender in force for the eleven years; that is to say, for ever; that is to say, they will compel people who hold paper-money of any sort, or who have debts due to them of any sort, to take Borough Bank-notes in payment instead of Gold and Silver; that is to say, we are to return to *cash payments* by the means of Acts of Parliament, which will compel holders of notes of any sort and creditors of every description to receive their payments in *paper-money*, or to receive, if the debtor pleases, *no payments at all!*

It will hardly be pretended; even the disciplined knaves of Corruption will hardly pretend, that this is not a repeal of a large part of Peel's Bill. No, this will not be pretended; for the country is now too enlightened to be cheated by any such pretences. When the measure was before the House the other day, Mr. Ricardo said, that he was *afraid*, that the people *out of doors* would regard it as a *repeal of Peel's Bill.* He may hush his fears; he may whisper quiet to his bosom, for there will be no *regardings* about the matter. The thing will be known to the bottom as well as he knows

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the Borough of Portarlington, and that is as well as any jew boy knows the amount of two dozen of oranges, rotten or sound, at twopence a-piece. Twice twelve make twenty-four; twice twenty-four make forty-eight; and forty-eight pence make four shillings; and these things are not clearer to the mind of the round eyed and hooked nose orange boy, than it will be to the minds of the people of England, that to make Bank Notes a legal tender even down to the sum of one pound is the oddest way in the world of *returning to cash payments.*

But, as the *Feast of the Gridiron* is to be the certain consequence of Peel's Bill not being carried into complete effect, it becomes me to show, and *very clearly* too, that Peel's Bill will be *repealed* in part, by the measure now in progress. In order to do this we must look at the Acts of Parliament themselves. We begin with what are called the *Restriction* Acts, beginning with that famous Act which first protected the Bank against the demands of its creditors, and which is Act 45 of the 37th year of the late King which was passed on the third of May 1797. We often talk in a vague manner about Peel's Bill; but after all, what was it in reality? It was an Act to *repeal other Acts.* It was an Act to make the Borough Bank *pay*, that is to say, to give *Gold* and *Silver* in exchange for their notes; that is to say, to *do away the legal tender*, which was the contrary of payment.

Be pleased to bear this constantly in your minds, and then you will be so good as to proceed with me to observe on the nature of the Acts which it repealed. The first of these Acts was, as I have just observed, passed on the 3d of May 1797. In its preamble it sets forth, that it had become necessary to prevent the Bank from issuing cash, in order that there might be cash in the Bank for the exigencies of the State; seeing that the people made unusual demands upon the Bank for

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cash. It then enacts divers things to protect the Bank legally against the demands of the holders of its notes. It enacts that the Bank shall not be compelled to pay in real money except under twenty shillings. It enacts that its notes shall be also a legal tender in the payment of taxes. Thus this Act of Parliament did in fact make Borough Bank-notes a legal tender in the payment of any sum above twenty shillings inclusive.

This Act was renewed and continued by thirteen other Acts, (the last of which was passed, in order to save the remnant of the cash, while Peel's Bill was under discussion, in the Spring of 1819. Thus, then, and I beg you to bear this well in mind, the object of Peel's Bill was to repeal these Acts; which were Acts, authorizing and enforcing the *legal tender*. Therefore, if legal tender be again enacted, the Borough Bank is again *protected*, and Peel's Bill is thus far repealed.

Now then, let us see what is said in Peel's Bill itself. This famous, this immortal Bill, setteth out by reciting all the several protecting Acts from that of the year 1797 to that of the year 1819; and then it proceeds thus: "And "whereas it is expedient that the "restrictions on payments in cash "by the said Bank should be "continued beyond the time to "which such restrictions are at "present limited, and that a defi- "nite period should be fixed for "the termination of such restric- "tions, and that preparatory mea- "sures should be taken with a "view to facilitate and ensure, on "the arrival of that period, *the "payment of the promissory notes "of the Bank of England in the "legal coin of the realm*: Be it "therefore, enacted by the King's "most excellent Majesty, by and "with the advice and consent of "the Lords Spiritual and Tem- "poral, and Commons, in this "present Parliament assembled, "and by the authority of the "same, That each and every of "the said Acts, shall be and the "same and every of them is and

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"are hereby further continued, "until the *first day of May* 1822; "and that from and after the said "first day of May 1822, the re- "strictions on payments in cash "under the said several Acts *shall* "*finally cease and determine*."

This is the language of Peel's Bill. The end is, *to insure the payment of the Borough Bank notes in the legal coin of the realm*; and the means is the ceasing, the *final ceasing of all the aforementioned Acts*. You see the whole jut of the matter lies in the *legal tender*; that is to say, in protecting the Bank against the legal demands of the holders of its notes. As to *restraining* the Bank; as to *prohibiting* the Bank from paying in cash, that was all mere delusive talk; for it was the Bank that first applied to the Ministers to be restrained! This is a curious species of restraint. What should we think of a man who said, "I shall pay my debts as "sure as you are born if you "do not restrain me!" What should we think of such a mouth? Did the writer of the broadest farce that ever set country girls and fellows laughing ever think of farce broader than this? Why, there it is, in Paper against Gold; there is all the whole farce, down in black and white: there are all the actors by name: there is the Borough Bank asking to be restrained and there is the Ministry restraining it. Nevertheless, though the Minister did restrain the Bank, he was not so very cruel as to prevent it from paying, in case of its *taking the thing greatly to heart*: that is to say (and this shows Pitt's humanity), if the Bank directors should want very much indeed; if they should have a great longing to pay; if they should be in danger of losing their health in consequence of this painful restraint, it was provided in every one of these Acts, that they might pay in cash, *whenever they pleased*, only upon giving *five days' notice* to the Speaker of the House of Commons, which

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notice the Speaker was required to have inserted forthwith in the London Gazette!

Now don't *laugh*, my friends. Don't laugh at this. It is no laughing matter; but the fact is, that the Bank Directors did remain in a state of *restriction* from the month of May 1797 to the month of March 1819; and never did, during the whole of that time give one single such notice to the Speaker of the House of Commons; but appeared to be as contented and as happy as if they had been under not the smallest restraint in the world. Nay, which you will say is something perfectly surprising, when it was proposed to take off the restraint by Peel's Bill, *they remonstrated against it!* They seemed, like a French married woman, who always dances and skips about to the music of her hymeneal chains, to have become so much attached to *bondage* by habit, as to be terrified at the thought of quitting it, and, like the captive in the bastile, to have been afraid of being at large, and actually to have pined under the beams of their restored liberty!

Mr. PEEL seemed resolved to get the better of this strange propensity; this unaccountable love of thraldom; and, to speak plainly, to take from them not a restraint to pay their debts, but the protection which the law gave them against paying those Debts. For two-and-twenty years they had been saying that they were *able* to pay; that they were *ready* and *willing:* for those two-and-twenty years they had never been really restrained but for *five days;* for they might have paid at any time upon giving five days' notice. They many times said that they *wished* to pay. Mr. PEEL, who really does appear to love "plain dealing," seems to have said, "Come ye "humbugs; we will stand this no "longer; we will take off the "protection, and *make* you pay." He no sooner proposed such a thing than they began to cry out about the *dangers to the country*

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from their being compelled to pay.

So, you see, as to *restraint* there was none; that was all a mere pretence and delusion from the beginning. The restraint was *upon the people;* upon those who held the notes. They were restrained by the legal tender law, from getting the cash in exchange for the notes; and this legal tender law; to get rid *of this, and this only, and to* "*insure the* "*payment of the promissory* "*notes of the Bank in the legal* "*coin of the realm;*" to effect this object the Bill declares to be the foundation and only foundation of its enactments.

Therefore, if legal tender be again enacted this Bill is overthrown! This Bill is repealed as to its most essential part. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is reported to have said as to this business, that his new measure above mentioned, is to give powers, not given by "*existing laws;*" why did not he say, not given by Peel's Bill? Why does he give the nickname of *existing laws* to the thing? And does he imagine that the nation will be blinded by any such shift or shuffle as this? According to Peel's Bill, legal tender in Bank-notes, whether Borough Bank or any other Bank, is to cease in *ten months' time.* Therefore, if legal tender be now enacted to exist after that ten months shall be expired, the moment that enactment takes place, Peel's Bill is partly repealed; and it cannot go into complete effect, and my memorable prophecy is fulfilled.

The new Bill will not be *entitled* a Bill to repeal Peel's Bill. But, no tricks! I will have no tricks. I, as the girls at the fairs say, "don't mean to stand none of your nonsense;" I will have "plain dealing." If they shuffle Mr. PEEL out of his Bill, they shall not shuffle me out of my Feast. None of your sawney's "hoot-a-wa-man;" none of your paddy's blubbering botheration; none of your bubble-bubble stuff,

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such as turns the brain of the Norfolk numskull, as thunder makes bad beer sour. I am resolved to have the thing straight forward, broad and clear as the road by which sham saints go to the devil. No matter to me what the Bill is *called*. They may call it a Bill, as they did once before, when the enactment was to put a stop to cash-payments, a Bill to *hasten* cash-payments. They may call it, in short, what they like; but if it contain a clause, making bank-notes a legal tender after the 1st of May next, it is a repeal of Peel's Bill. Names are nothing in a case like this. Suppose a Bill were passed to-day, making it death instead of banishment to bring the House into contempt; and then suppose another Bill were passed to-morrow, saying that that crying offence should be punished only with banishment. This latter Bill would be a *repeal* of the former Bill, though it might make no *mention* of it first or last. Bills are like wills: if they differ, that which bears the latest date has the force, and the former one has none. *Tricks*, then, will be useless with me. I shall stick to the text; and, thank God, we have it down this time in black and white.

But, an Act of Parliament has always a WHEREAS, which is a very nasty and troublesome thing, when people want to shuffle. This Act of Parliament that is going to be passed, must have a WHEREAS as well as other Acts of Parliament; and Borough elector never had mouth that watered for bribe more than my mouth waters to get at this WHEREAS. I have been almost cracking my brains ever since I first heard of this forthcoming measure, to imagine how the Act will *begin*! I can readily conceive that the preamble will be barren enough in *reasons*. In cases where there are no reasons at all, however, something must be said in this way. It will never do to say, "WHEREAS be it enacted;" and it will never do to begin with, "Be it enacted." Such

a morality would shock the sensitive feelings of the House; and would, at the least, cause a horse laugh to be heard from one end of the country to the other. The Bill may begin with, "Whereas it is *expedient*, that," ..... But, that what? Here 's the rub. What is it that will be expedient? Peel's Bill says that "it is *expedient to* "ensure payment in the *legal coin* "*of the realm*." The Speaker, when he presented the Bill, told the Prince Regent that it was *expedient* to return to cash-payments; to return to our ancient and healthful state of currency, and that if ever this was to be effected, it was to be effected by that Bill; and the Prince Regent echoed the opinion. Well, then, will the new Bill say that it is expedient to make bank-notes a legal tender after May next, and to make them continue to pass for eleven years longer, instead of "*ensuring* "*payment* in the legal coin of the "realm?" If this should be the case, one thing will happen at any rate, and that is, that I shall no longer have imputed to me a monopoly of that *inconsistency* which Glory's base tribe have so long, and so much in vain, thought to so much expense, wrung from the soul of avarice itself, been dinning, or endeavouring to din into the ears of the country.

Amongst the entertainments at the feast of the Gridiron will be the *reading of this new Bill*. The Bill *must be printed*. An Act will hardly be passed without a job for *Andrew Strahle*; and Andrew sells the Acts; and we can buy them. So that there is no getting out of this. We have *form* here as well as substance; and forms, though sometimes mischievous, are trammels for good purposes as well as bad. We must have *the Act*. It is not a resolution, prefaced by a speechifying; but it is an Act that we are going to have, and that we shall have to compare with the Act which we possess already. It will not be a sort of bewildering, indefinite thing; that may mean any thing or mean nothing. It

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will be a thing that must have a meaning; and it shall be my business to make that meaning well known to the world, in spite of Six-Acts and all the bonds and judgments and pains and penalties thereunto belonging.

So much for the nature of the measure itself: let us now see of what nature will be its probable *effects*.

You, the money-hoarders, will please to bear in mind, that I have constantly been asserting, and, I think, proving, that prices would not come (speaking always with allowance for the effect of seasons) to their lowest mark, until after the first of May 1823; that is to say, until Peel's Bill should go into complete effect. My *Rustic Harangues* at Battle, at Huntingdon and at other places; but particularly at these two latter, pretty fully expressed my opinions upon this subject, and I think they left very little doubt in the mind of any sane person who heard or who afterwards read them. But, you will bear in mind, that I always kept Peel's Bill in view; the *complete going into effect of that Bill;* for, if that Bill were trenched upon; if the stern-path-of-duty men *gave way;* if they did not stick to that immortal measure; then my reasoning did not hold. My conclusion was always, guarded with this condition; "If Peel's Bill be "carried into full effect, then such "and such will be the case."

My opinion was founded on this; that when that Bill came to go into full effect in May 1823, there would not be a country rag left in circulation; because, the people would take the rags, carry them to the rag-men, and say, "Take your rags: take your dirty "worthless stuff and give us gold, "bearing the image and superscription of our gracious, gay "and gallant Sovereign, bestriding his neighing charger, and "driving his javelin into the "bowels of the devil-begotten "hag of paper-money." This, said I, will be the conduct of this most thinking and most loyal

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people. Conduct, continued I, which they cannot now adopt, because the rag-man stands, backed and bolstered up by the law, and, instead of gold, tenders them the paper of the Borough Bank; promise to promise to pay; promise for promise, rag for rag; and no more talk of *money* than in a soldier's mess-room three hours after the issue of the pay. It is the accursed *legal tender*, said I, addressing myself to the good hearty fellows of Huntingdon, it is the diabolical *legal tender* that keeps us where we are and keeps the Borough-men where they are; "but," exclaimed I, in the fulness of the joy of my heart, "this accursed *legal tender*, "thanks to the Bill of that worthy "young man, Mr. PEEL, will, on "the first of May 1823, to use the "language of that immortal do-"cument, *finally cease and de-"termine.*"

Judge, then, my Friends, of the trouble of my mind; think, I pray you, how I must be *upset*; what mortification I must endure, what affliction of spirit, upon hearing it proposed to re-enact this accursed *legal tender*, and to rob us of the inexpressible blessing of carrying about in our pockets the picture of that Sovereign, who, though he seldom meet the eye, is well known to live in the hearts of all his people!

The *legal tender* is, in fact, the whole of the thing. To be sure, it is possible that it may be legal tender only in part, to *begin with*, and thus creep on by degrees: part this session and part next session; and never *say* a word about Peel's Bill; and so clip it away bit by bit; take it as children do sugar or nuts, by such small quantities at a time, as to make themselves wonder, at last, what is become of the great mass upon which they have been practising their purloinings. I can very well remember that, when I was a soldier, it almost always happened that I could hardly believe my own eyes when I came to the last piece of my loaf, made of

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those beans and other equally valuable and wholesome materials with which the honest contractors used to regale us. It would be thus with Peel's Bill, which would all go away imperceptibly, if I were not here to keep a sharp look out, and to cry, "slice No. 1.!" "slice No. 2.!" in a manner that shall make the whole nation hear me a great deal plainer than I can hear the watchmen after I am up in the morning, though they ought to cry out several hours after that. On board ship they call it *singing out* the hour or the fathoms, and a pretty singing it is, especially in the latter case, when every creature on board is so anxious to hear; but never did ship's crew or passengers hear "*quarter less seven*" plainer than I will make this nation hear "slice No. 1., 2., 3.," and so on to the last. I'll "sing out" I'll warrant you, my Friends! Nothing but a *law* can alter a *law*; unless, indeed, they were to do as they did in 1797; that is to say, *violate the law*; set it at open defiance; and then come to the Parliament and obtain an *Act of Indemnity*; a thing, I do not say is to be *expected*, God forbid; but a thing, if we might judge from the past, far within the scope of possibility.

The *legal tender*, however, once enacted, once re-established, may *grow*. Like all *other* such things it may extend itself. At first it may be confined to tenders made in payment of country bank-notes, and to tenders made in payment of taxes, and may not reach so far as to include tenders made at the Borough bank itself. This is, however, you will observe, *everlasting paper-money*; it is to declare, that we can return to cash-payments only *in part*. Nevertheless, as the Borough bank would be always ready to pay its own notes at its own shop in gold, there would be, with those who preferred the gold (as there is at this time) no very great ground of complaint. The same hangings;

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the same breakings of country banks; the same loss, ruin, and misery which have never failed to arise out of such a system, and which are now constantly arising out of this system, would be still going on; but if the *legal tender* went no farther than what is here contemplated, though it would in part be a repeal of Peel's Bill, it would not make things *worse* than they are at this time; and it would give not even me any ground to complain on the score of compulsory paper; for, if ever I voluntarily take country bank-note into my hand either in payment or in change, or ever keep Borough bank-note any longer time than is absolutely necessary for the sending of it or taking it to the shop, may all the pains and penalties of poverty conduct me to the grave, and that, too, without shroud or coffin!

But the effect upon the country in general will be great and lasting. The same quantity of circulating medium that is now in circulation may, probably, be kept in circulation by this new scheme. I had so often proved, in articles resembling the *Rustic Harangue* at Battle, which Mr. Cranmer did me the honour to listen to with great attention, though, I am sorry to say, he does not appear to have profited much from it; I had so often proved, in spite of all the ridiculous doctrines of Mr. Ricardo, that prices would continue to fall till after Peel's Bill had gone into complete effect; I had hammered away so long, and with blows so heavy, that I at last drove into the skulls of the Ministers themselves a conviction that if Peel's Bill were suffered to go into *full effect*, wheat would come down to four shillings a bushel or less upon an average of years; that the landlords would grow absolutely ungovernable and outrageous, and that God only knew what deeds of justice they might be deluded to commit in the hour of their distress! This appears to have frightened them, and to make them begin to think of something to ward off the fatal blow; some-

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thing to turn it aside for a little while at any rate.

Yet, observe, all that this measure will do, unless it extend to *legal tender* at the *Borough bank-shop*, is to *keep things as they are*; to keep prices from falling lower than they now are upon an average of years. That is cold comfort for farmers and landlords; but that is better than *worse*. That is better than wheat at three or four shillings a bushel, that Peel's Bill going into full effect would have brought us to. I say it is better for the present landlords and present farmers *for the present*. Their ruin will be *less quick* than it would have been; the transfer of property slower. There will not be that *shock* that there would have been during the next twelve months. The transfer will go on; but slower than it would have gone on. It will be more ruinous *in the end*, to the farmers especially; because many of them that are not already ruined will endeavour to hold on, in the vague hope that *things may come about*, a hope that would be totally destroyed by the full enforcement of Peel's Bill, and destroyed, too, before the pockets of some of the farmers were quite empty. It will be with them only destruction deferred; but it will prevent the landlords from being driven suddenly to adopt *deeds of desperation* like that of Parliamentary Reform. It will be a little time gained, at any rate, even if it stop with that limited repeal of which I have just spoken.

But, things cannot remain in this state long. We now count by *months*. If this scheme, or something of this sort, had not been adopted, we should soon have counted by *weeks*; and, in ten months' time, by *days*. This scheme may make us continue to count by months still; and he who counts by longer periods is a fool. But, in this state the thing cannot remain long. Backward or forward it must move: backward to *paper-money*, or forward to *reduction of interest*

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of Debt; for, if we could suppose it possible for the Landlords to stand by and see their estates taken away; if we could suppose it possible for the thing to go on till the farms were all in the hands of bailiffs of the Government, cultivated under its orders for the benefit of the tax-eaters; if we could suppose any thing so monstrous as this to take place without a general convulsion in the country, still what is to be done *in case of war?*

Look, I beseech you, at the state of things; then, suppose the necessity of *preparations for war;* and then ask yourselves what must happen. You will observe that the payments now are not gold payments, because there is a legal tender in existence. The proposed measure would probably keep things much about what they are; and the transfer of property would be regularly going on; but let war come and then thirty or forty millions of additional taxes will be required to be raised within the year. That would be impossible. Loans must, therefore, be resorted to again; and could these loans be raised in the *present currency?* Oh! no! we must return to the paper again; the legal tender must be made to extend again to the payments at the Borough Bank-shop. Thus all the attempts to pay in specie will have been blown to nothing. Everlasting paper will have come, and even the independence of the country, in case of war with a powerful enemy, will be put to hazard.

Nonsense, indeed, that is which runs in the heads of some persons, namely, that war can ever be a profitable trade. It may be necessary. It may be indispensable to the safety of a country; but it must, first or last, bring its *burthens.* Some of the farmers and landlords imagine, that because they prospered during the last war, war in general is favourable to their prosperity. They forget two things: first, that the prosperity was false; that it was

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not stable; that it arose from an anticipation of the nation's resources; that it was like the splendour of a spendthrift, who shines away for a year and then becomes a beggar; that it was obtained through the means of a base paper-money, which destroyed the little farmer, which robbed the labourer; which made a National Debt, a Waterloo Debt and a pauper Debt; and that this thing called prosperity was in fact only the prelude to present penury and ruin. They forget, secondly, that the last war was a singular sort of war; that it made this country the place of deposit for the plunder taken from other nations. The French Nobles and Priests plundered their own country to enrich this; and, between Droits of Admiralty and Orders in Council, millions upon millions of the property of other nations were brought into this country; while, at the same time, their colonies were, one after another, rifled by us, our own colonies remaining untouched. We had thus almost a monopoly of the trade, commerce and resources of all the nations around us. Is this to happen again, think you? Do you think that we should issue and enforce Orders in Council against America and France, with all these enormous debts hanging about our neck?

There must be loans, then, and most terrible loans, too. These will make the debt run up very quickly to an amount quite farcical but to think of. Legal tender must come back to the Bank-shop itself. All must be paper, more completely than ever; and then observe, that the enemy has the power at any time, to *destroy that paper*. He need not employ fleets and armies against us. A few hundreds of thousands of pounds would do the business here as completely as it was done in France by the assignats made in London. To suppose that the enemy would not use these means, is to suppose that he would not be in earnest. To a certainty he

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would use them; and then the nation, or rather, the government, would fall by the very means which it was the object of Peel's Bill to prevent being put in execution. It was said, in the debates upon that Bill, by Lord LIVERPOOL, by Lord GRENVILLE, and by Mr. PEEL himself, that the nation never could be safe unless it returned to gold and silver payments. Nothing could be truer than this. It was, indeed, what I had repeatedly demonstrated in my several articles on the *Puff Out;* but what is of more importance than my demonstrations, is, that the *thing was true;* and so clearly true as for no man in his senses to entertain a doubt upon the subject. Well, then, if the nation can never be *safe* without gold and silver payments, what are we to think of this measure, the necessary and the only possible object of which is to make gold and silver payments utterly unknown except in London!

If war were to be only talked of, is it to be believed that the Borough Bank could continue to pay in gold an hour? It must be protected again; and then all is paper and the Government is exposed to that species of warfare which we ourselves carried on against the assignats of France. It is in vain for the Parliament to make *Resolutions* about *adhering to the Standard:* it may resolve and resolve again, as long as it pleases, about the *standard.* The standard may be the same though the quartern loaf cost a pound. It has recently resolved that it will not alter the standard in fineness, weight or denomination. This it may adhere to still, and yet pass laws that will drive the standard wholly out of circulation; and the Bank Directors may again say, that the people *like the Paper better than the Gold.* I have heard of a father who was so tender a parent that he could *refuse* his children nothing; but then he strictly *forbade* them ever to ask for any thing. This was going sensibly to work, and the example seems to have been followed

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by our Government and Borough Bank, who, if they had really intended that gold should get into circulation, would have given the people their choice by *abolishing the legal tender* many months ago. It is the legal tender that prevents the gold getting about the country. This legal tender would have been removed on the first of May next by Peel's Bill; and now while there are persons who have the audacity to pretend, that the Borough Bank wishes to get gold about the country instead of its notes, a Bill is actually before the House of Commons to do away that part of Peel's Bill which would have put an end to legal tender in ten months' time!

Need I say more to satisfy any body, that you, my Friends, the Money Hoarders, have acted the prudent part? It is impossible to foresee precisely what will take place. A very great reduction of taxes, or a complete transfer of real property, must take place, unless we return to the paper. To reduce taxes to any considerable amount without a reduction of the interest of the Debt, would strip the Government naked and leave it as defenceless as a child. To reduce the interest of the Debt is manifestly just; but it would shake the system to the centre, and could not, indeed, be accomplished without a terrible convulsion, unless preceded by a Parliamentary Reform. With this Reform all is easy; but greatly do I fear that those who have the power to make it in a quiet manner, never will make it, and this fear is strengthened rather than otherwise, by the puerile proceedings and pretensions of those persons in Parliament who affect to have the cause in hand.

To the paper, therefore, to the base and barefaced paper, I think we shall return. The Landlords will not suffer their estates to pass away from them without making a monstrous clamour. Taught by experience; taught by what has happened within these six months; backed, as they find they are, by the loud and unanimous

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voice of the people, when they *propose the reduction of taxes*, that is the battery, the plain common sense and popular battery that they will play off. The Ministers galled by this fire, and the Borough gentlemen trembling for their precious possessions, will seek shelter behind bales of paper, which, like the cotton bags that the Yankees used at New Orleans, will be an impenetrable parapet. Out will come the paper again; and my opinion is, that the measure with regard to which I have troubled you with these remarks, is only the first step towards coming back to that identical system of paper-money which was so much decried and abused by the ever famous Parliament of 1819.

In conclusion, my Friends, let me, once more, point out to you the state of vacillation and uncertainty in which the whole thing now exists. The wisest man is not able to foresee a tenth part of what may take place. There are so many contending interests at work, that a convulsion, a pecuniary convulsion, at any rate, must be expected. When we see the Landlords actually endeavouring to impress the people with a notion that an *abolition of tithes* would bring relief; when we see published, under the name of an Irish Landlord, statements and opinions respecting the Church and the Clergy, the publication of which would, only a little while ago, have sent men to gaol under conviction for sedition and blasphemy; when we see interests like these at open war, who is to say what may or what may not happen? One thing, however, can never happen; and that is, that a piece of gold coin will never lose its value and cease to be an efficient resource to the possessor. Add, therefore, my Friends, while you are able, to the number of these pieces, and then you may be tranquil amidst alarms, and in that tranquillity will receive the reward of your abhorrence of a base and all-ruining paper-money. I am

Your sincere Friend,

WM. COBBETT.

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JOURNAL

FROM

KENSINGTON to St. ALBANS.

SAINT ALBANS, *June* 19, 1822.—From Kensington to this place, through *Edgware*, *Stanmore*, and *Watford*, the crop is almost entirely *hay* from *fields* of *permanent* grass, manured by dung and other matter brought from the *Wen*. Near the Wen, where they have had the *first haul* of the Irish and other perambulating labourers, the hay is all in rick. Some miles further down it is nearly all in. Towards Stanmore and Watford, a third, perhaps, of the grass remains to be cut. It is curious to see how the thing regulates itself. We saw, all the way down, squads of labourers, of different departments, migrating from tract to tract; leaving the cleared fields behind them and proceeding on towards the work to be yet performed; and, then, as to the classes of labourers, the *mowers*, with their scythes on their shoulders, were in front, going on towards the standing crops, while the *hay-makers* were coming on behind towards the grass already cut or cutting. The weather is fair and warm; so that the public-houses on the road are pouring out their beer pretty fast, and are getting a good share of the wages of these thirsty souls. It is an exchange of beer for sweat; but, the tax-eaters get, after all, the far greater part of the sweat; for, if it were not for the tax, the beer would sell for *three-halfpence* a pot, instead of *fivepence*. Of this three-pence-halfpenny the *Jews* and *Jobbers* get about twopence-halfpenny. It is curious to observe how the different labours are divided as to the *nations*. The mowers are all *English*; the hay-makers all *Irish*. Scotchmen toil hard enough in Scotland; but, when they go *from home* it is not to *work*, if you please. They are found in *gardens*, and especially in *gentlemen's* gardens. Tying up flowers, picking dead leaves off exotics, peeping into melon-frames,

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publishing the banns of marriage between the "*male*" and "*female*" blossoms, tap-tap-tapping against a wall with a hammer that weighs half an ounce. They have backs as straight and shoulders as square as heroes of Waterloo; and who can blame them? The *digging*, the *mowing*, the *carrying of loads*; all the break-back and sweat-extracting work, they leave to be performed by those who have less *prudence* than they have. The great purpose of human art, the great end of human study, is to obtain *ease*, to throw the burden of labour from our own shoulders, and fix it on those of others. The crop of hay is very large, and that part which is in, is in very good order. We shall have hardly any hay that is not fine and sweet; and we shall have it, carried to London, at less, I dare say, than 3*l.* a *load*, that is 18 cwt. So that here the *evil* of "*over-production*" will be great indeed! Whether we shall have any projects for taking hay into *pawn* is more than any of us can say; for, after what we have seen, need we be surprised, if we were to hear it proposed to take butter and even milk into pawn? In after times, the mad projects of these days will become proverbial. The Oracle and the over-production men will totally supplant the *March-hare*.—This is, all along here, and especially as far as Stanmore, a very dull and ugly country: flat, and all *grass-fields* and *elms*. Few *birds* of any kind, and few *constant* labourers being wanted, scarcely any cottages and gardens, which form one of the great beauties of a country. Stanmore is on a hill; but it looks over a country of little variety, though rich. What a difference between the view here and those which carry the eye over the coppices, the corn-fields, the hop-gardens and the orchards of Kent! It is miserable land from Stanmore to Watford, where we get into *Hertfordshire*. Hence to Saint Albans there is generally *chalk at bottom* with a *red* tenacious loam

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at top, with flints, grey on the outside, and dark blue within. Wherever this is the soil, the wheat grows well. The crops, and especially that of the barley, are very fine and very forward. The wheat, in general, does not appear to be a *heavy* crop; but the ears seem as if they would be full *from bottom to top*; and, we have had so much *heat*, that the grain is pretty sure to be plump, let the weather, for the rest of the summer, be what it may. The produce depends more on the weather, *previous to the coming out of the ear*, than on the *subsequent weather*. In the northern parts of America, where they have, some years, not heat enough to bring the Indian Corn to perfection, I have observed, that, if they have about fifteen days with the thermometer at *ninety*, before the ear makes its appearance, the crop never fails, though the weather may be ever so unfavourable *afterwards*. This allies with the old remark of the country people in England, that "*May* makes or mars the wheat;" for, it *is* in May, that the ear and the grains are *formed*.

KENSINGTON, *June* 24, 1822. —Set out at four this morning for *Redbourn*, and then turned off to the Westward to go to High Wycombe, through *Hempstead* and *Chesham*. The *wheat* is good all the way. The barley and oats *good enough* till I came to Hempstead. But the land along here is very fine: a red tenacious flinty loam upon a bed of chalk at a yard or two beneath, which, in my opinion, is the very best *corn land* that we have in England. The fields here, like those in the rich parts of Devonshire, will bear *perpetual grass*. Any of them will become *upland meadows*. The land is, in short, excellent, and it is a real corn-country. The *trees*, from Redburne to Hempstead are very fine; oaks, ashes, and beeches. Some of the finest of each sort, and the very finest ashes I ever saw in my life. They are in great numbers, and make the

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fields look most beautiful. No villanous things of the *fir-tribe* offend the eye here. The custom is in this part of Hertfordshire (and, I am told it continues into Bedfordshire) to leave a *border* round the ploughed part of the fields to bear grass and to make hay from, so that, the grass being now made into hay, every corn field has a closely mowed *grass walk* about *ten feet wide* all round it, between the corn and the hedge. This is most beautiful! The hedges are now full of the shepherd's rose, honeysuckles, and all sorts of wild flowers; so that you have upon a grass walk, with this most beautiful of all flower gardens and shrubberies on your one hand, and with the corn on the other. And thus you go from field to field (on foot or on horseback), the sort of corn, the sort of underwood and timber, the shape and size of the fields, the height of the hedge-rows, the height of the trees, all *continually varying*. Talk of *pleasure-grounds* indeed! What, that man ever invented, under the name of pleasure-grounds, can equal these fields in Hertfordshire? — This is a profitable system too; for the ground under hedges bears little corn, and it bears very good grass. Something, however, depends on the *nature of the soil*; for it is not all land that will bear grass, fit for hay, *perpetually*; and, when the land will not do that, these headlands would only be a harbour for weeds and couch-grass, the seeds of which would fill the fields with their mischievous race. — MR. TULL has observed upon the great use of headlands. — It is curious enough, that these headlands *cease* soon after you *get into Buckinghamshire*. At first you see now-and-then a field *without* a grass headland; then it comes to now-and-then a field *with* one; and, at the end of five or six miles, they wholly cease. *Hempstead* is a very pretty town, with beautiful environs, and there is a canal that comes near it, and that goes

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on to London. It lies at the foot of a hill. It is clean, substantially built, and a very pretty place altogether. Between Hempstead and Gerrard's Cross the land is not so good. I came into Buckinghamshire before I got into the latter place. Passed over two commons. But, still, the land is *not bad*. It is *drier*; nearer the chalk, and not so red. The *wheat* continues good, though not heavy; but the barley, on the land that is not very good, is light, begins to look *blue*, and the backward oats are very short. On the still thinner lands the barley and oats must be a very short crop.—People do not sow *turnips*, the ground is so dry; and, I should think, that the *Swede-crop* will be very short; for *Swedes* ought to be up at least, by this time. If I had Swedes to sow, I would sow them now, and upon ground very deeply and finely broken. I would sow *directly* after the plough, not being *half an hour* behind it, and would *roll* the ground as hard as possible. I am sure the plants would come up, even without rain. And, the moment the rain came, they would grow famously.—*Chesham* is a nice little town, lying in a deep and narrow valley, with a stream of water running through it. All along this country that I have come, the labourers' dwellings are good. They are made of what they call *brick-nogs*; that is to say, *a frame of wood*, and a *single brick thick*, filling up the vacancies between the timber. They are generally covered with tile. Not *pretty* by any means; but they are good; and you see here as in Kent, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire; and, indeed, in almost every part of England; that most interesting of all objects, that which is such an honour to England, and that which distinguishes it from all the rest of the world, namely, those *neatly kept and productive little gardens round the labourers' houses*, which are very seldom unornamented with more or less of flowers. We have only to look

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at; there to know what sort of people English labourers are: these gardens are the answer to the *Malthuses* and the *Scarletts*. Shut your mouths, you Scotch Economists; cease bawling, Mr. Brougham and you Edinburgh Reviewers, till *you* can show us something, not *like*, but approaching towards a likeness of *this!*

The orchards all along this country are by no means bad. Not like those of Herefordshire and the north of Kent; but a great deal better than in many other parts of the kingdom. The cherry-trees are pretty abundant and particularly good. There are not many of the *merries*, as they call them in Kent and Hampshire; that is to say, the little black cherry, the name of which is a corruption from the French, *merise*, in the singular, and *merises* in the plural. I saw the little boys in many places set to keep the birds off the cherries, which reminded me of the time when I followed the same occupation, and also of the toll that I used to take in payment. The children are all along here, I mean the little children, locked out of the doors, while the fathers and mothers are at work in the fields. I saw many little groups of this sort; and this is one advantage of having plenty of room on the outside of a house. I never saw the country children better clad, or look cleaner and fatter than they look here, and I have the very great pleasure to add, that I do not think I saw three acres of potatoes in this whole tract of fine country, from ST. ALBANS to REDBOURN, from REDBOURN to HEMPSTEAD, and from HEMPSTEAD to CHESHAM. In all the houses where I have been, they use the *roasted rye* instead of coffee or tea, and I saw one gentleman who had sown a piece of rye (a grain not common in this part of the country) for the express purpose. It costs about *three farthings a pound*, roasted and ground into powder. The pay of the labourers varies from eight to twelve shillings a-week.

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Grass mowers get two shillings a-day, two quarts of what they call strong beer, and as much small beer as they can drink. After quitting CHESHAM, I passed through a wood, resembling, as nearly as possible, the woods in the more cultivated parts of Long Island, with these exceptions, that there the woods consist of a great variety of trees, and of more beautiful foliage. Here there are only two sorts of trees beech and oak; but the wood at bottom was precisely like an American wood: none of that stuff which we generally call underwood: the trees standing very thick in some places: the shade so complete as never to permit herbage below: no bushes of any sort; and nothing to impede your steps but little spindling trees here and there grown up from the seed. The trees here are as lofty, too, as they generally are in the Long Island woods, and as straight, except in cases where you find clumps of the tulip-tree which sometimes go much above a hundred feet high as straight as a line. The oaks seem here to vie with the beeches in size as well as in loftiness and straightness. I saw several oaks which I think were more than eighty feet high, and several with a clear stem of more than forty feet, being pretty nearly as far through at that distance from the ground as at bottom, and I think I saw more than one with a clear stem of fifty feet, a foot and a half through at that distance from the ground. This is by far the finest *plank oak* that I ever saw in England. The road through the wood is winding and brings you out at the corner of a field, lying sloping to the south, three sides of it bordered by wood and the field planted as an orchard. This is precisely what you see in so many thousands of places in America. I had passed through *Hempstead* a little while before, which certainly gave its name to the Township in which I lived in Long Island, and which I used to write *Hampstead*, contrary to the orthography of the place, never having heard of such a place as

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Hempstead in England. Passing through *Hempstead* I gave my mind a toss back to Long Island, and this beautiful wood and orchard really made me almost conceit that I was there, and gave rise to a thousand interesting and pleasant reflections. On quitting the wood I crossed the great road from London to WENDOVER; went across the park of Mr. DRAKE and up a steep hill towards the great road leading to WYCOMBE. Mr. DRAKE's is a very beautiful place and has a great deal of fine timber upon it. I think I counted pretty nearly 200 oak trees worth, on an average, five pounds a-piece, growing within twenty yards of the road that I was going along. Mr. DRAKE has some thousands of these I dare say, besides his beech; and, therefore, *he* will be able to stand a tug with the fundholders for some time. When I got to High Wycombe, I found every thing a week earlier than in the rich part of Hertfordshire. High Wycombe, as if the name was ironical, lies along the bottom of a narrow and deep valley, the hills on each side being very steep indeed. The valley runs somewhere about from east to west, and the wheat on the hills facing the south will, if this weather continue, be fit to reap in ten days. I saw one field of oats that a bold farmer would cut next Monday. WYCOMBE is a very fine and very clean Market Town; the people all looking extremely well; the girls somewhat larger featured and larger boned than those in Sussex and not so fresh-coloured and bright-eyed. More like the girls of America, and that is saying quite as much as any reasonable woman can expect or wish for. The Hills on the south side of WYCOMBE form a park and estate now the property of SMITH who was a banker or stocking-maker at Nottingham, who was made a Lord in the time of Pitt and who purchased this estate of the late Marquis of LANSDOWNE, one of whose titles is Baron WYCOMBE. WYCOMBE is one of those famous

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things called Boroughs, and 31 votes in this Borough send Sir John Dashwood and Sir Thos. Baring to the collective wisdom. The landlord, where I put up, "remembered" the name of Dashwood, but had "*forgotten*" how the "*other*" was! There would be no forgettings of this sort, if these *thirty-four*, together with their representatives, were called upon to pay the share of the National Debt due from High Wycombe. Between High Wycombe and Beaconsfield, where the soil is much about that last described, the wheat continued to be equally early with that about Wycombe. As I approached Uxbridge I got off the chalk upon a gravelly bottom, and then from Uxbridge to Shepherd's Bush on a bottom of clay. Grass-fields and elm-trees, with here and there a wheat or a bean-field, form the features of this most ugly country, which would have been perfectly unbearable after quitting the neighbourhoods of Hempstead, Chesham and High Wycombe, had it not been for the diversion I derived from meeting, in all the various modes of conveyance, the cockneys going to *Ealing Fair*, which is one of those things which nature herself would almost seem to have provided for drawing off the matter and giving occasional relief to the overcharged Wen. I have traversed to-day what I think may be called an average of England as to corn-crops. Some of the best, certainly; and pretty nearly some of the worst. My observation as to the wheat is, that it will be a fair average crop, and extremely early; because, though it is not a heavy crop, though the ears are not long they will be full; and the earliness seems to preclude the possibility of blight, and to ensure plump grain. The barley and oats must, upon an average, be a light crop. The peas a light crop; and as to the beans, unless there have been rains where beans are mostly grown, they cannot be half a crop; for they will not endure heat. I tried masagan beans

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in Long Island, and could not get them to bear more than a pod or two upon a stem. Beans love cold land and shade. The earliness of the harvest (for early it must be) is always a clear advantage. This fine summer, though it may not lead to a good crop of turnips, has already put safe into store such a crop of hay as I believe England never saw before. Looking out of the window I see the harness of the Wiltshire wagon-horses (at this moment going by) covered with the chalk-dust of that county; so that the fine weather continues in the West. The saint-foin hay has all been got in, in the chalk countries, without a drop of wet; and when that is the case, the farmers stand in no need of oats. The grass crops have been large every where, as well as got in in good order. The fallows must be in excellent order. It must be a sloven indeed that will sow his wheat in foul ground next autumn; and the Sun, where the fallows have been well stirred, will have done more to enrich the land than all the dung-carts and all the other means employed by the hand of man. Such a summer is a great blessing; and the only draw-back is, the dismal apprehension of not seeing such another for many years to come. It is favourable for poultry, for colts, for calves, for lambs, for young animals of all descriptions, not excepting the game. The partridges will be very early. They are now getting into the roads with their young ones to roll in the dust. The first broods of partridges in England are very frequently killed by the wet and cold; and this is one reason why the game is not so plenty here as it is in countries more blest with sun. This will not be the case this year; and, in short, this is one of the finest years that I ever knew.

WM. COBBETT.

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DINNER AT KENNINGTON.

GREAT "inconsistency" to be sure, in not persevering in my intention with regard to this Dinner. It was intended to be a burlesque celebration of the Anniversary of Peel's Bill; but, it having been suggested to me by persons on whose judgment it becomes me to place great reliance, that such celebration might be construed into the existence of a want of feeling on my part for the innumerable tradesmen and farmers, in every part of the Kingdom, of whose most dreadful anguish of mind that Bill has been the *immediate* cause, I have resolved not to run the risk of any such construction; and, therefore, the intention of having the Dinner is given up. I know well that great numbers of persons would see the celebration in its true light; but I also know that there are innumerable hirelings of one sort and another, and particularly those attached to the stock-jobbing crew, who would be ready to give a wrong turn to the thing; and that they might, possibly, raise a clamour, which would be injurious to a cause no part of which ought to be risked for the sake of half a day's fun. The *Feast of the Gridiron* is a very different thing. That will be to celebrate merely the accomplishment of prophecies; and cannot possibly wound the feelings of any one, except it be those whose feelings it is desirable to wound.

WM. COBBETT.

THE last Register, containing the Letter to the Men of Kent on their late Petition for a Reduction of the Interest of the Debt, is now published in a *Threepenny* Pamphlet, and is entitled, "REDUCTION NO ROBBERY." —It is very desirable that it should be widely circulated; that it should get into all parts of the country and be well read and digested; that it should be read by all the Farmers more especially, and that, too, without delay. It will, therefore, for the purpose of circulation, be sold as follows:

For a thousand, 5*l.*
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For two hundred and seventy-five, 2*l.*
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Gentlemen in the country will obtain any number sent to them, carriage free, by writing to the Office of the Register, No. 183, Fleet-street, London.

END OF VOL. XLII.

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